

THE EARLY CERAMIC WARES OF CHINA BY A. L. HETHERINGTON

POPULAR AND ABRIDGED EDITION, WITH
A COLOURED FRONTISPIECE AND 30
ILLUSTRATIONS IN BLACK AND WHITE



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PREFACE

A VERY generous reception was accorded by the public to *The Early Ceramic Wares of China* at the beginning of 1922. In fact the whole edition left the publishers' hands within a week of publication, and copies are now difficult to obtain. This being the case, it has been thought desirable to issue an abridged edition on a smaller scale to meet the demand by the general public for a book on the subject of the early wares at a modest price.

The present volume has this object in view, and the opportunity has been taken to bring the subject-matter up to date. The chapter on Ju Yao has been entirely rewritten owing to the results of a further investigation which was only foreshadowed in the previous edition. A few other additions have been made in the light of more recent theories and facts, but as a whole the letter-press has been curtailed so as to make the present volume a general summary of the subject with only sufficient detail to make it a reliable book of easy reference to the collector and to the ordinary public interested in the study of Chinese art.

The chapter on technique has been omitted, and so have the chapters on miscellaneous factories and on marks and inscriptions; the present object being to confine attention to the principal features displayed by the wares without digressing into more difficult paths.

PREFACE

The number of illustrations, which in the original edition numbered upwards of one hundred, with several in colour, have been reduced to thirty, but it is hoped that even so the story is adequately illustrated.

I wish to express my thanks to Mr. R. L. Hobson and to Mr. F. N. Schiller for their kind assistance in proof-reading.

A. L. HETHERINGTON.

April 1924.

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THE DYNASTIC EPOCHS OF CHINA

The following epochs are dealt with in this book.

The Mythical and Legendary Periods, down to 2205 B.C.

Hsia Dynasty, 2205-1766 B.C.

Shang Dynasty, 1766-1122 B.C.

Chou Dynasty, 1122-255 B.C.

Ch'in Dynasty, 255-206 B.C.

Han Dynasty, 206 B.C.-A.D. 25.

Later Han Dynasty, A.D. 25-221.

San Kuo (Three Kingdoms), 221-265.

Western Chin Dynasty, 265-317.

Eastern Chin Dynasty, 317-420.

Division between North and South:

Sung Dynasty (House of Liu), 420-479.

Ch'i Dynasty, 479-502.

Liang Dynasty, 502-557.

Ch'ên Dynasty, 557-587.

Northern Wei Dynasty (House of Toba), 386-535.

Western Wei Dynasty, 535-557.

Eastern Wei Dynasty, 534-550.

Northern Ch'i Dynasty, 550-589.

Northern Chou Dynasty, 557-589.

Sui Dynasty, 589-618.

T'ang Dynasty, 618-907.

Five-Dynasty Epoch :

Posterior Liang Dynasty, 907-923.

Posterior T'ang Dynasty, 923-936.

Posterior Chin Dynasty, 936-947.

Posterior Han Dynasty, 947-951.

Posterior Chou Dynasty, 951-960.

Sung Dynasty, 960-1127.

Southern Sung Dynasty, 1127-1280.

Yüan Dynasty, 1280-1368.

PRONUNCIATION OF CHINESE NAMES

The correct pronunciation of Chinese names, whether of persons or places, is of small consequence to collectors. It may even be considered affectation to pronounce Ko yao as "gor yow" or Tz'ü Chou as "tsur jo," and confusion may be caused among European collectors by using the Pekinese pronunciation. In case the reader cares to know the approximate English values of the consonants and vowels used, the following guide may prove of service, though in some cases the sounds only approximate to English sounds.

a as in *father*.
ai as *ai* in *aisle*.
ao as *ou* in *loud*.
e as in *bet*.
ê as *ur* in *fur*.
ei as in *feint*.
i as in *machine*.
ia as *ya* in *yard*.
ie as in *siesta*.
o as in *lore*.
ou as *o* in *owe*.
u as *oo* in *food*.
ü as in *une* (Fr.).
ü as *e* in *adze*.

ch (unaspirated) as a *j*.
ch' (aspirated) as in *change*.
hs as *sh*.
j as the French *j* with a slight tendency to *r*.
k as a *g*.
k' (aspirated) as *k* in *kind*.
p (unaspirated) as a *b*.
p' (aspirated) as *p* in *peck*.
t (unaspirated) as a *d*.
t' (aspirated) as a *t*.
ts as in *hits*.
tz as *ts*.

THE EARLY CERAMIC WARES OF CHINA

CHAPTER I

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

To realise in true perspective the different phases through which Chinese ceramic art has passed it is necessary to have a general acquaintance with the political influences which have operated in succeeding ages in the Middle Kingdom, and no excuse is necessary for beginning a general description of the earlier Chinese wares with a brief account of the history of the country in its relation to ceramics. Some knowledge of Chinese history is essential, but the ordinary collector hardly appreciates the fact, and even if he does, he has neither the time nor inclination to read the authoritative works on the subject. An attempt will accordingly be made to introduce the reader to the chief types of the ware produced during the long period extending from about 200 B.C.—A.D. 1368, by a résumé of the main features of the dynasties which held sway in those fifteen hundred odd years.

The term antique is a relative one: the collector of English and continental pottery and porcelain applies it to the products of factories operating in the eighteenth century, but all the wares with which this book concerns itself were produced before Charles I came to the throne, and by far the greater part from the time when Canute was teaching his courtiers natural philosophy on the sea shore to the date at which Prince Edward defeated Simon de Montfort at Evesham. The antiquity of Chinese civilisation is but vaguely appreciated by us, and it is difficult to

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realise, for instance, that football was played in China several centuries before Julius Cæsar landed in this country: it is equally remarkable to learn that polo was played in the seventh century.¹

Such facts as these are startling, but they help to adjust our minds and to explain how it is that we find in China at a very early date the most beautiful expressions of ceramic art instead of the crudest types, as might have been expected from our knowledge of the wares made in Britain or the near Continent during the same period. Professor Fenollosa tells us that the highest point was reached in the T'ang dynasty (seventh to ninth centuries), and that after a fall and a rise again in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, creative art fell from that time with scarcely a break to its present level.

It is true that in the opinion of many, perhaps of most, collectors to-day the porcelain produced in the reigns of K'ang Hsi, of his son Yung Chêng and of his grandson Ch'ien Lung, *i.e.* the period 1662-1796, is the most pleasing of all the wares of China. But this is in large measure due to the fact that the earlier specimens have only recently been available in any quantity for acquisition and appreciation in this country. There is already a rapidly-growing body of collectors who are losing their interest in the more elaborate productions of the late seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries and are collecting in their place the simpler types and the purer art exhibited by the wares of the T'ang, Sung,

¹ See *Adversaria Sinica*. H. A. Giles.

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Yüan and Ming dynasties, particularly those of the first three.

The decoration employed and the shapes made in the pre-Ming wares are essentially manifestations of the art of the potter and in consonance with the material of which the vessels were composed. During the Ming dynasty, when decoration in underglaze blue and in polychrome was introduced generally, the art was still a potter's art and in keeping with the potter's medium; in other words the decoration was suitable. When we come to the reign of K'ang Hsi, we first begin to see signs of over-elaboration, which is hardly in keeping with the material, though the art may still be said to be "suitable." But the wonderful porcelains of the Yung Chêng, and more particularly those of the Ch'ien Lung reign show pronounced signs of what may be called "unsuitable" art; by which I mean that the beautiful pictures depicted in enamels on the potter's medium would find a more appropriate place on the silk or canvas of the artist. There are of course exceptions to this generalisation, and many later specimens, decorated in what is sometimes called "Chinese taste" to distinguish it from the type of design which was made for the foreign market, are very artistic.

The following questions may reasonably be asked. How is it that these earlier specimens are now coming to this and other Western Countries? Why were they not available before? What assurance is there that they are genuine? Historical facts and commercial considerations furnish the answers.

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The potter's art has been held in high esteem by the Chinese for centuries. In the West, architecture has always made a great appeal to the æsthetic sense; but in China, art seems to have found a more popular expression in objects which could be the daily companions of the people. No Chinese gentleman of position and standing was without at least a few fine specimens of porcelain, and the wealthy were proud of their choice collections. The Chinese, moreover, have deep-rooted in their nature a love for everything connected with bygone ages, ancestral worship and filial piety are deeply ingrained in their being. For centuries they have counted amongst their treasures and heirlooms specimens of pottery and porcelain, and very acute financial distress must be felt before they part with them. The events which have occurred in China since the fall of the Manchu dynasty and the financial conditions prevailing during recent years, account in some measure for the opportunity we have been given in this country; especially since the greater appreciation of these early wares shown by Europeans has involved a correspondingly higher market value being placed upon them.

Moreover, development of the country has led to the construction of railways for the more rapid conveyance of traffic of all kinds. Railway construction has naturally necessitated cuttings, and some of these have had to be made in places used for burial purposes. As a result, pottery and porcelain vessels and figures have been unearthed which have lain buried for centuries undisturbed by a people imbued with a profound sense of the

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sanctity of tombs and with a horror of their violation.

Western influences, religious and other, coupled with an acute appreciation of commercial values, have led to a further exploitation of unearned increments, with the result that the earth has been made to yield up treasures of which but a small percentage has as yet seen the light of the present day. When we think of the millions and millions of Chinese graves, in many of which objects of ceramic importance are interred, we may expect to see a further supply of specimens of mortuary ware of ancient date. Cases are known of temples recently converted into schools, and the pottery and porcelain vessels deposited in them for centuries have been placed upon the market. We are only on the threshold of further knowledge, and it is no idle prophecy to say that fifty years hence Western knowledge of Chinese ceramics will be a vastly different thing from what it is at the present time.

But the exploration of grave-sites is not the only source from which knowledge will be procurable. Some day, we may hope in the not too distant future, the famous kiln-sites will be properly and scientifically explored. Already we have received specimens from some of these, notably the Lung-ch'üan district in Chêkiang, and if these sites can be investigated in a systematic fashion, our present knowledge will be extended to a considerable degree.

The fascination of the early wares is great and is not to be accounted for merely by their antiquity, though their age naturally enhances

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their interest. It is their beauty of colour and simplicity of form which make such an appeal to those who collect examples of the products of the Chinese potters who lived about a thousand years ago. Whether it be the professional potter of to-day, or the professional artist, or the art critic, all unite in eulogy of the pre-Ming potter and his skill. The Chinese porcelain factories of the Manchu dynasty were largely occupied in trying to reproduce the earlier wares, and while new inventions can be recorded in that dynasty, there was comparatively little discovered of first importance that the Sung potters did not know already.

The early wares are essentially simple, and therein lies the chief difficulty of their reproduction. The few lines employed, whether used in the shape or in the decoration, betray more readily the weaker hand and are harder to imitate than a more complicated composition. It is relatively easy to describe anything in half a dozen sentences, but it is another matter to do so in one. So in art, a stroke or two by the master hand achieves the end more surely than a dozen by the less skilled artist or craftsman.

It is a striking fact that a number of collectors who have been keenly interested in the Ming wares, and in the Ch'ing porcelains of the early eighteenth century, have gradually lost their enthusiasm for them in preference for the pre-Ming wares; but one would find it difficult to discover cases where the reverse process has taken place. The body of collectors of the early types is of course not a large one at present, for

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the reasons already mentioned, and too much stress must not be laid on the enthusiasm displayed by a relatively small number of individuals. But the remark, "I have been taking up the early things of late," is one which is made with increasing frequency. A collector of K'ang Hsi and Yung Chêng porcelains sees for sale, perhaps, a fine example of white Ting yao with a beautifully-drawn design showing through its creamy glaze: he falls, and his complete destruction (or shall we say emancipation?) is only a matter of time; for it is difficult to live with a fine example of the Sung potter and rest content with the more elaborate beauty of his descendant. It would not be difficult to cite instances of people who are left quite cold by an inspection of eighteenth-century potting of distinction, but who wax enthusiastic over a piece of Lung-ch'üan celadon. The reader will be saying that this is merely an *ex parte* statement to be discounted accordingly, so we must pass on to a few suggestions to the would-be collector who is willing to commence a study of the wares described in this volume.

The cost of fine examples is high, and is not likely to become less as time goes on and the number of collectors grows. The supply, apart from mortuary wares, is necessarily a limited one, and though it has been augmented recently for the reasons already referred to, it is more than probable that an increasing difficulty will be experienced in obtaining specimens of the first class.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to become a real student of the wares without constantly

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handling and examining pieces, and this can only be done by actual possession of specimens. 'A student need not, however, seek perfect examples in order to make himself acquainted with the characteristics of glazes and pastes, though fragments which serve this purpose perfectly well do not satisfy as a rule: too much is left to the imagination in regard to shape and design. On the other hand, a damaged bowl or plate meets all the essential requirements of the case, and as a mended specimen can be bought for very much less than a perfect one, those with limited means available for the prosecution of their hobby will do well to acquire first-class workmanship in a damaged condition rather than perfect specimens of the second class. Their purse will suffer less and their pleasure will be more lasting. As a matter of fact, a bowl, plate or vase well repaired in gold lacquer is not seriously disfigured thereby, although the cracks are the more apparent.

Another suggestion, but one which the enthusiast finds difficulty in adopting, is to take time over building up a collection. The temptation to fall to the first available example of a type not yet represented is great, but it only results in dissatisfaction later on when a finer specimen is seen. The less desirable item is then discarded, probably at a pecuniary loss.

There is also the inclination to buy a piece merely because it is cheap and despite the fact that the collector possesses an adequate (and possibly better) example already. This is not collecting but accumulating, and a home may become a storehouse of "pots" with which the

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owner has merely a passing acquaintance. Every specimen should be acquired with the definite object of filling a lacuna in the collection.

A Chinese connoisseur who lived centuries ago said, "Copper and porcelain are cherished above gold and silver, in order to cultivate simplicity and elegance. Pairs are to be avoided with a view to aiming at rare and choice specimens." Here we have the view of the native collector, and however desirable it may be to have a pair of any type, the cost will probably be more than double that of the single piece, and the collection will in no wise be strengthened.

Temptation to break the tenth commandment does not increase as experience is gained. No doubt at an early stage envy of someone else's possessions is keen, but there is a delightful free-masonry among collectors which encourages admiration of the taste or good fortune of others without engendering covetousness. Indeed one of the greatest charms of collecting lies in the friendships created by the process.

CHAPTER II

HISTORICAL REVIEW

THE dynastic histories of China were compiled at the close of each dynasty from accounts written by scholars and historians appointed for the purpose at the time when the events were taking place. No one but the historians themselves was allowed to read these records; not even the reigning Emperor was permitted to edit the home truths which were being said about him, and this system has obtained since the Han dynasty (206 B.C.-A.D. 25). The records were locked up in chests which were not opened until the close of the dynasty, when they formed the basis of its official history. In this way we have complete and authentic accounts of the principal events which have taken place since very early times.

The mythical P'an Ku is said to have lived about 4850 B.C. and is regarded as the founder of Chinese art; to him are ascribed the five essential artistic qualifications, for he *modelled* the earth, he *shaped* the mountains, he *carved out* the rivers, he *beat out* the volcanoes and he *painted* the heavens.

P'an Ku was the progenitor of a series of legendary kings of whom Fu Hsi (2852-2738 B.C.) is one of the most famous. He invented the lute and the lyre, and was the first to devise a form of writing by pictorial expression. It is related of him that, while standing on the bank of the Yellow River, he saw emerge from its muddy waters a dragon horse, on whose back were portrayed mystic signs, which were subsequently

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developed by Fu Hsi into the eight trigrams or *pa kua* which have played so important a part in the systems of divination of every succeeding age. The Emperor Wên Wang (1231-1135 B.C.) later developed the *pa kua* from eight into sixty-four symbols.

Some authors state that the dragon horse presented Fu Hsi with a scroll on which the mystic diagrams were inscribed.

Shên Nung (2737 B.C.) elaborated the pictorial element in the primitive characters and signs, such as those for sun, moon, tree and horse. These are still to be found on pottery and porcelain, and they also provide the basis of the modern characters for these nouns.

Huang Ti (2697 B.C.), the Yellow Emperor, was another legendary king who is reputed to have taught the people how to make utensils of wood, pottery and metal.

Of the other great names of this era that of Chin T'ien (2597 B.C.) is important. He is said to have maintained that "in the earth were substances being heated by natural forces which one day man would bend to his will and make containers," and during his reign pottery is said to have been made by pounding clay into rough shapes. Ti Chih (2366 B.C.) improved the process by discovering a "scarlet clay which greatly pleased the people." The Emperor Yao, his successor (2357 B.C.) is regarded as the first sage. He it was who first began improving cultivation by draining the marshes, and apparently in his reign different coloured clays were used for the crude pottery of the time. His son-in-law Shun

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(2255 B.C.) was equally famous; he also made pottery and produced a criminal code which is the basis of that used to-day.

But authentic Chinese history really begins with the foundation of the Hsia dynasty (2205-1766 B.C.) by the great Yü. The name of the dynasty is derived from that of a small state in Honan which was given to Yü for controlling the Yellow River. His father had been employed by Yao in draining the marshes and controlling the floods caused by that river overflowing its banks, but his failure to do so with success brought about his execution and the task was given to his son, who succeeded in coping with the floods by making channels instead of erecting dams. His success in this work led directly to the throne, and he founded a dynasty which lasted four hundred years. The overthrow of this dynasty came about during the reign of its seventeenth representative, Chieh Kuei, a most dissolute monarch who is chiefly famous for the underground palace he built for his consort, where orgies of every description were conducted.

The Shang dynasty (1766-1122 B.C.) was founded by T'ang, who is reputed to have been the son of the Minister of Education under Shun, and the capital was placed at Po in the present province of Anhui. He changed the royal colour from black to white to emphasise the change of dynasty and is renowned for his dealing with a drought which persisted for seven years of his reign. Though various steps were taken to relieve the people in their distress, these were of no avail, and so T'ang decided that more drastic

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measures were necessary. He proceeded to a mulberry grove arrayed in sacrificial white and there confessed his sins, offering himself as a sacrifice to Heaven in place of his innocent subjects. Copious rain immediately fell in response to his prayers. The next succeeding reigns were of small importance, but it is interesting to note that the capital was moved first to Kan to avoid the inundations of the Yellow River, thence to Siang in Honan, thence to Kung in Shansi, and thence to Hsing T'ai in Chihli: finally it was removed to Yin, a town north of the Yellow River in Honan, by P'an K'eng (1401-1373 B.C.), who changed the name of the dynasty to Yin.

The last emperor of the dynasty was even worse than Chieh Kuei, who brought the Hsia dynasty to its doom. His name was Chou Hsin, and he also had a consort who encouraged him in vice; an underground palace did not suit her ideas, and the Emperor to please her built the famous Stag Tower, which took seven years to erect. Here orgies of the most monstrous kinds were perpetrated and the most fiendish forms of cruelty and torture were devised. The people at last openly rebelled, and the Emperor fled to the Stag Tower, where he burned himself to death by setting the building on fire, and his consort was seized and executed, to the delight and relief of all.

The Chou dynasty (1122-255 B.C.) with its span of 867 years is the longest dynasty in the history of China. During its course many of the laws, philosophies and national institutions which

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persist to the present day find their origin, though the philosophers of the Sung dynasty are the most famous. The dynasty was founded by Wu Wang, another descendant of the Minister of Education under Shun, who signalled its inauguration by altering the royal colour to brown. With the loyal help of his brother, the Duke of Chou, who on Wu Wang's death acted as regent, the kingdom was systematically organised; the feudal system was perfected and five orders of nobility¹ were created—dukes (*kung*), marquises (*hou*), earls (*po*), viscounts (*tzu*), and barons (*nan*), to whom were allotted varying areas of territory. Schools were established throughout the Empire and houses were built in which the aged might pass their last days in comfort at the expense of the national Exchequer. The revenue was derived from tithes, either of land produce or of income, and the national administration was secured by a Cabinet of Ministers acting under the Emperor.

The capital of the Empire was moved from the province of Shensi to Lo Yang in Honan in 770 B.C., and this step was probably largely instrumental in causing the downfall of the dynasty; for though the seat of government was thus placed in a more central position and became

¹ The Chinese system of awarding degrees of nobility is interesting. These titles are not hereditary save in exceptional cases, e.g. that of Confucius; in such cases the title is made hereditary for a specified number of generations. Normally, Chinese titles give no similar precedence to the sons of the individual awarded them, though, curiously enough, they may be carried back retrospectively to the ancestors. The heir takes the next lower rank to that enjoyed by his predecessor until the title becomes extinct.

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Less exposed to inroads from barbarians, the power of the crown was transferred largely to the nobles of the vassal states: in particular, less control could be exercised over the state of Ch'in, which held sway in Shensi, and which was gradually gaining power.

Mu Wang, the fifth sovereign of the dynasty (1001-946 B.C.), is said to have made a famous journey to the West in his chariot drawn by eight marvellous horses, but the story is purely mythological and cannot be taken as evidence of contact at that date with Western Asia and its civilisation.

In the year 551 B.C. Confucius was born, and the advent of this philosopher would alone mark the Chou dynasty as especially conspicuous in Chinese history. He was a contemporary of Lao Tzū and is said by some historians to have been a disciple of that great exponent of Taoism. Tao may be said to represent impersonal nature which permeates everything and to which everything owes its origin, and its cult is intimately bound up with mysticism. Confucianism, as inculcated by the great sage, is a philosophy pure and simple, a system of morality rather than a religion, and the supernatural plays no part in its doctrine. Particular stress was laid on reverence for tradition and on filial piety, which included not only dutiful behaviour on the part of children to parents, but loyalty to the throne and respect for authority. Corrupted though the doctrine became in later times, it has probably done more to keep the Empire together than any other single influence. In 372 B.C.

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Mencius was born, and this famous philosopher and moralist is held in Chinese estimation as second only to Confucius, whose teachings he expounded.

The dynasty, which came to an end owing to the growth in power of the vassal state of Ch'in, probably owes the length of its sway to the fact that the feudal states were more or less equal in power, and predominance was not attained by any one of them until near its close. Distinguished generals and statesmen abound in its history, but with a few exceptions its rulers were men of but moderate ability. On the artistic side, the dynasty is chiefly renowned for its bronzes, of which a good many specimens are extant in this country: no doubt a vastly greater number are treasured in China. The forms of the bronzes were copied later in pottery and porcelain, and the main shapes and forms are consequently familiar to us.

The reader will find China often referred to as the "Middle Kingdom," and it may be of interest to explain how the term came to be used. During early days the "world" was China in the eyes of its inhabitants, and they styled their country *t'ien hsia*, or "all that is under heaven." Later, exploration showed that there were other countries "under heaven," and so the title could not be considered strictly accurate. But these other bordering lands and peoples could not be regarded in Chinese estimation as of much importance, and China was still the hub of the universe: so the name *chung kuo*, or the Middle Kingdom, became applied to the empire instead of *t'ien hsia*.

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The Ch'in dynasty (255-206 B.C.) can hardly be said to have become dominant over all China until the Emperor Shih Huang Ti reached full power in 221 B.C. His name is famous for two particular reasons. He desired to mark the fact that Chinese history before his accession was of no account, so he ordered the burning of all the ancient books except those on agriculture, medicine and divination, and caused four hundred and sixty *litterati* to be burned alive; fortunately, the order in regard to the books was not carried out with completeness, and in later years some of the ancient books were unearthed and served as a basis for the redissemination of the classics. The other event for which his reign is famous was the building of the Great Wall by his general Mêng T'ien, which took ten years to erect and involved the employment of 300,000 labourers. Mêng T'ien is believed to have been the inventor of the writing brush; and paper made from silk was also first used at this time, though paper made from the cheaper bamboo was not introduced till the Han dynasty. Moreover, the use of the Lesser Seal characters in place of the more cumbrous Greater Seal was an invention of this age.

Despite his failings Shih Huang Ti was a great statesman, and he left behind him a China which was an empire and not a congeries of petty warring states.

We now come to one of the most important eras from the ceramic point of view. The Han dynasty (206 B.C.-A.D. 25) was founded by Kao Ti, the Lofty Emperor or Lofty Ancestor: he

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gave his dynasty the title of Han, from the name of a river flowing into the Yang-tze near which he was born, and he moved his capital from Lo Yang to Ch'ang An in Shensi. He is said to have given a great impetus to pottery production by founding a new school of pottery-makers and subsidising it from the Imperial treasury.

The dynasty reached the zenith of its power in the reign of Wu Ti (140-86 B.C.), who surrounded himself with eminent scholars and experienced councillors, though it should be noted that his love for the occult gave great impetus to Taoism and enabled that philosophy to obtain a foothold which it retained for many a generation.

Communication with the Western races first took place during this epoch, since the travels of Mu Wang referred to earlier are mere legends. This fact accounts probably for the initial appearance of glaze upon the ceramic wares of China, which, in the opinion of most authorities, occurred during this dynasty.

Towards the close of the dynasty supreme power was usurped by Wang Mang, but he was eventually overthrown by Liu Hsüan; the latter ruled, however, for two years only and abdicated in favour of Liu Hsiu, who established the Later or Eastern Han dynasty which was dominant from A.D. 25-221. Liu Hsiu, or Kwang Wu Ti as he called himself on founding the new regime, was a great general, who studied military tactics by means of pottery figures; on attaining supreme power he devoted himself to bringing peace to the Empire. Kwang Wu Ti moved his capital back to Lo Yang in Honan, which accounts

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for the dynasty being called the Eastern Han. His son Ming Ti is said to have introduced Buddhism into China from India in A.D. 65, and the influence of this religion on ceramic art is discussed later.

The succeeding epoch of Chinese history was a most exciting period. It is known as the San Kuo, or the Three Kingdoms (A.D. 221-265), and corresponds in the Chinese imagination to our romantic age, when King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table were performing their deeds of chivalry or deciding questions of policy by feats of arms. A high percentage of the plots on which subsequent Chinese novels have been based was gathered from the stories centring round these brave days of old. This period is of some interest to collectors, as it produced the famous warrior-general Kwan Yü or Kwan Ti, who was deified as the God of War in A.D. 1594 by the Ming Emperor Shen Tsung or Wan Li.

The Three Kingdoms were the Wei in the North, with its capital at Lo Yang; the Wu in the country immediately south of the Yang-tze, with its capital at Nanking; and the Shu in the South-West, with its capital at Ch'êng Tu in Szechuan. Eventually, the Wei emerged as the superior power, and under another Wu Ti the Western Chin dynasty was formed (A.D. 265-317). Some measure of peace and progress was secured in this short period, but rather more than a hundred years of anarchy and rebellion followed when the Eastern Chin dynasty assumed control (A.D. 317-420). The division between the North and South of China came next. In the North, the

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most important ruling power was the Northern Wei dynasty (House of Toba) which held sway from A.D. 386-535. This house was succeeded by other minor supremacies while four houses held Imperial power elsewhere, viz., Sung, generally known as the "House of Liu," 420-479, which must not be confused with the great Sung dynasty established later; Ch'i, 479-502; Liang, 502-557, and Ch'ên, 557-587. The three hundred and sixty odd years which elapsed after the extinction of the power of the house of Han were full of disturbance; first one kinglet obtained the upper hand and then another; each change was accompanied by cruelty and slaughter, and the whole country was in a state of turmoil and unrest. With no continuous and central government the arts had little chance of cultivation, but on the establishment of the next dynasty great advances were put on foot. It should, however, be noted that many fine examples of the sculptor's art date from the Northern Wei dynasty.

The Sui dynasty (589-618) and its first Emperor Yang Chien, known as Kao Tsu, welded together again the North and South, and the capital was again placed in Ch'ang An in Shensi. The national outlook became broader and the arts were encouraged; science as applied to pottery was developed and the chemical treatment of glazes received attention. The Emperor himself formed a private collection of great intrinsic and artistic value, and subsidised potteries from his private purse. Yang Ti, the second representative of this House, was a person of extravagant taste; he moved his capital back to

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Lo Yang, where a series of magnificent palaces was erected for his use and for that of his ladies, who numbered 3,000. It is said that no less than 2,000,000 men were employed for building his palaces and for laying out the parks and gardens, in which the rarest flowers and trees from distant parts of the empire were planted. These flowering trees and shrubs were ordered by the Emperor to be in bloom all the year round, so when nature failed in the task, skilled workmen were employed to supply in silk and satin imitation flowers and leaves. Yang Ti is known to posterity chiefly for his construction of an immense system of canals which served for generations as the chief highways of traffic, though their original object was to gratify the luxurious Emperor by providing a comfortable means of travel on his pleasure trips. These canals were no mere ditches but were forty paces wide and lined with stone to prevent erosion of the banks. The Emperor prided himself also on his literary attainments and instituted new academic degrees.

The next dynasty was the T'ang (A.D. 618-907), perhaps the greatest artistic age China has ever known: the second emperor of the house, T'ai Tsung, was one of its brightest ornaments; though a great general, he was a greater statesman, and his literary attainments and kindly disposition have gained for him a lasting respect. He was fortunate in having a queen who supported him in his beneficent rule. The history of China does not show us many Imperial ladies who added to the country's glory, though there are several who tarnished it; and it is pleasing

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to read of the influence exerted by the unpretentious but talented Ch'ang Sun.

During the early years of the dynasty the Empire was enlarged considerably and its sphere of influence spread to Thibet and India, though penetration into Corea met with only partial success at first. The wealth of China at this date increased enormously, and a vast commerce was opened up with the Indo-China Peninsula and the neighbouring islands of Java and Sumatra. Trade with the Persian Gulf was carried on and Arab merchants settled in the cities of China; even the Greek Emperor Theodosius sent an Embassy to the Chinese court in 640.

Lo Yang, the capital, was rebuilt upon a grand scale, magnificent palace buildings were erected, and large public gardens provided recreation for the people. But besides material advantages, this age is noted for its literary output, and it has been computed that eighty-eight per cent. of the poetry of China was produced in the T'ang dynasty.

The great T'ai Tsung was succeeded by his son Kao Tsung, but the real power was soon seized by one of the remarkable women of the world's history, Wu Hou. She is believed to have developed considerable artistic ability and to have published a volume of paintings and poetry which furnished subjects for ceramic decoration. But her proclivities led her into less desirable paths: possessed of great personal beauty, she soon ousted the Empress from Imperial favour and Kao Tsung became a puppet in her hands: after his death she became the virtual ruler of

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the Empire, and, though cruel, she ruled it with a firm hand.

Towards the end of the dynasty the power of the palace Eunuchs gradually became more and more pronounced, and the rebellions which took place during the latter part of the ninth century, and which finally brought about the downfall of the house of T'ang, can be traced in large measure to their machinations.

The period which followed the T'ang dynasty was one of anarchy and military despotism, when supreme power was obtained by a series of successful military leaders; it is known as the Wu Tai, or the Five-Dynasty Epoch. It extended over about fifty years (907-960), and included the Posterior Liang, the Posterior T'ang, the Posterior Chin, the Posterior Han and the Posterior Chou dynasties. None of these can be said to have obtained sovereignty over China as a whole; on the North, the Tartar tribes were a continual source of trouble, and the states in the South owed little or no allegiance to the throne.

The last emperor ¹ of the Posterior Chou, Shih Tsung, is of some importance from a ceramic point of view, because it was in his reign (954-960) that the famous Ch'ai porcelain was made. Shih Tsung was of the family of Ch'ai, and from this fact the name of the ware is derived. A general of Shih Tsung and of his son Kung Ti was proclaimed emperor, who under the name of T'ai Tsu founded the famous Sung dynasty.

¹ As a matter of fact Shih Tsung's son, Kung Ti, reigned for a few months before the dynasty fell.

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The Sung dynasty proper extended from 960-1127; but in the latter year the Empire was considerably curtailed and the Southern Sung dynasty was formed. During the Sung dynasty proper China became reunited and its capital was planted at K'ai-fêng Fu in Honan, a city well known to collectors as the centre round which so many notable ceramic factories were established.

T'ai Tsu, the founder of the dynasty, set about reducing the military power of his great generals, to whom he owed his throne, by giving them land and civil positions in exchange for the surrender of their military commands: by this means he removed a probable menace to the stability of his House. He also took away the power of life and death from provincial governors and vested it in a central Board without the consent of which capital punishment could not be inflicted. A new era of peace consequently dawned within the Empire, though the incursions of the Tartar tribes, which later caused the partition of China and eventually gave rise to its complete subjugation, were a continual source of trouble from outside.

During the reign of T'ai Tsu's successor, T'ai Tsung, war with the Ch'i Tans or Eastern Tartars was of periodic occurrence, but in the reign of his son (Chên Tsung) peace was patched up on the payment of a yearly subsidy to the Ch'i Tans. It was about this time (1004) that Chên Tsung ordered Imperial porcelain to be manufactured, and the famous ceramic metropolis of Ching-tê Chên was consequently established as an Im-

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perial factory. The original name of the place was Ch'ang-nan Chên, but it was changed to bear the reigning name of the emperor at that date, viz., Ching Tê.

The last¹ emperor of the Sung dynasty proper was Hui Tsung, and to his patronage may be ascribed much of the artistic eminence which distinguished this era. He was himself an artist of distinction, and, gathering about him the most talented painters, he instituted a great art academy. Hui Tsung also formed a museum of the first importance and spared no effort or expense in collecting antiques and *objets d'art*. To these galleries he took his fellow-artists, criticising the specimens and thereby encouraging progressive efforts on their part.

But these æsthetic labours evidently occupied the Imperial attention unduly, and the Foreign Office was neglected in consequence. Hui Tsung ill-advisedly entered into a treaty with the Chin Tartars whereby he hoped to bring about the destruction of the troublesome Ch'i Tans. Though the Ch'i Tans were successfully subdued by this means, the Chins became increasingly powerful, and turning covetous eyes on Northern China they soon overran the provinces north of the Yang-tze. The end of the Sung dynasty proper was brought about by a disgraceful treaty with the Chins, who imposed an enormous indemnity and captured Hui Tsung with 3,000 persons of the royal household.

The Southern Sung dynasty (1127-1280)

¹ Ch'in Tsung, the son of Hui Tsung, reigned for only two years after his father's abdication.

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which was thus formed had its capital at Hang Chou with the broad waters of the Yang-tze between it and the avaricious Chins. Here Kao Tsung and his successor Hsiao Tsung proceeded to restore the fallen fortunes of the House of Sung : successful efforts were made to resist the Chins, and territory was wrested from them, but this was probably due in some measure to Chin preoccupation on their Northern frontier, in which the Mongols were beginning to take an undesirable interest.

Hang Chou during this period was one of the most beautiful cities in China, as we can gather from Marco Polo's description of it.¹ Adjoining a spacious lake with a series of islets upon it and intersected with waterways spanned by 12,000 stone bridges, Hang Chou must have been a greater Venice. The streets were paved with stone with unpaved side-tracks for horsemen. Hot and cold baths, large enough to accommodate 100 persons each, existed to the number of 3,000, the water for which was supplied by springs. The palaces, temples and public buildings seem to have been built on a corresponding scale.

Here the court continued the æsthetic pursuits of Hui Tsung, and art in all its manifestations was encouraged to a degree at least as great as at K'ai-fêng Fu. Included in the move across the river were master potters from the famous Northern factories, such as K'ai-fêng Fu in Honan, where the Kuan ware was made, and they

¹ See Col. Yule's *Marco Polo*, vol. ii, p. 145 *et seq.*, in which a full description of the city, as it existed comparatively few years later, is given.

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were re-established at the new capital to continue the production of beautiful specimens of this branch of art. The *T'ao Shuo*, or Description of Pottery, by Chu Yen, to which frequent reference will be made later, mentions the porcelains which were manufactured in kilns set up at Hang Chou.

The wares produced after the removal of the court to Hang Chou are regarded in some quarters as inferior to those made before that event. But there does not seem any real justification for this view, even if at this distance of time it is possible to distinguish them. A Chinese work written as long ago as 1620, speaking of the Ting wares, tells us that "lovers of ancient art-work who can distinguish Southern from Northern Ting and are not taken in by these later imitations, have no reason for shame and may be reckoned connoisseurs." Perhaps in the twentieth century we may be permitted to show equal respect for the wares produced on either side of the great river and count ourselves lucky if we can distinguish with certainty a Sung product from an eighteenth or nineteenth century Chinese or Japanese copy.

We have already hinted at the growing power of the Mongols, which by the early years of the thirteenth century under the direction of Jenghis Khan was assuming gigantic proportions. The Chins were the first to feel the strength of Mongol arms both on their West and North-west frontiers: during the early stages of Mongol aggression the natural barriers formed by the passes in Shensi and Shansi helped the Chins to

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resist the onslaught, but by 1218 the Mongol army managed to establish itself in Shansi and Chihli. The closing years of Jenghis Khan's life (he died in 1227) were occupied in further conflict with the Chins, whose territory he wished to add to his mighty empire, created by the conquest of no fewer than forty kingdoms, great and small, extending to the Black Sea. The subjugation of the Chins was completed in 1233 with the ready assistance of the Sung armies, but this was the beginning of the end of the Chinese dynasty. By 1268 Jenghis Khan's grandson, Kublai Khan, now firmly established in his capital at Cambulac (Peking), was ready for the invasion and conquest of China south of the Yang-tze, in order to add that territory to that of the Yüan dynasty which he had already proclaimed. His object was not attained till twelve years later, but the end of the Sung dynasty came about in 1280, when the whole of China was added to the Mongol Empire, which then extended from the Yellow Sea in the East to the Black Sea in the West, and from Northern Mongolia to Tongking in the South.

The head of a world empire of these dimensions could not hope to exercise direct control over the heterogeneous units of which it was composed, and the Yüan dynasty was never firmly established in China except possibly during the earliest of its eighty-seven years of dominance.

The Mongols, being essentially a Northern and hardy race, found the softer climate of Southern China enervating; and the luxurious civilisation that they found in their new possessions was

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something to which they were unaccustomed and which they could not fully appreciate. The Chinese on their side never ceased to regard their new rulers as foreigners and barbarians; and while they were careful by means of flattery and outward protestations to give the impression of complete subjugation, no real or lasting national change was created by the new order of things.

The material benefit which the Mongol absorption brought to China—besides administering a tonic to the *moral* of the people—was the opening up of intercourse with the West to a degree which had never before been possible. Trade with distant countries, forming other portions of the Mongol Empire, was a natural consequence, and the commercial prosperity of China was considerably increased. The completion of the Grand Canal connecting Hang Chou with Peking was another material advantage arising from Mongol enterprise. The canal had been made, in part, centuries before, but Kublai extended and completed it in order to convey more readily the tribute rice from Hang Chou to Peking. The work was commenced in 1282, and it took seven years to complete the 650 miles of new construction and connexion of existing waterways.

The effect on the artistic production of the country seems to have been to introduce a discordant note into the Sung ideals. Forcefulness of themes relating to war-like operations was superimposed not only in artistic expression on the literary side, but in the paintings and ceramic wares of the time. So far as the last-named are

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concerned there seems to have been no radical change in their general content and form, but an atmosphere of harshness seems to surround and permeate them.

Creative art could not be expected to flourish under these conditions, and from this point must be traced the first signs of decline in artistic expression which marks the productions of China in later ages.

This book deals only with the wares produced during the period ending with the Yüan dynasty; but as the traditions were to some extent carried on in the next succeeding Ming dynasty, some reference to its institution in 1368 should be made.

Chu Yüan-chang was the man who restored China to the Chinese: he was a man of humble origin, and his birth is said to have been signalled by the appearance of a bursting star over the house in which he was born. The nation which had for long been chafing under a foreign rule, totally opposed to its traditions and mentality, rose to the call of Chu Yüan-chang. He defeated the last Mongol Emperor Shun Ti and was hailed with acclamation to the Dragon Throne to found the Ming dynasty and to adopt the name of Hung Wu.

Hung Wu was no mere warrior; he was also a statesman, and his early acts mark him as such. He cut down the extravagant expenditure of the court which had characterised the closing years of the Yüan dynasty, and encouraged national education by re-establishing schools all over the country. In addition he gave special

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protection to the Han Lin Academy, and instituted libraries in all the provincial capitals.

It is not necessary to tell the story of the Ming or "Bright" dynasty, except to mention that its end was caused by the moral decay of the Imperial house, and to record that its downfall was brought about by the Manchus in 1644 after a rule of 276 years.

CHAPTER III

CHINESE GRAVE CUSTOMS

So many examples of the early Chinese wares are obtained from graves that it is necessary to explain shortly the ancient customs of China in regard to the disposal of the remains of the dead. Those who wish to study the early burial customs and rites should read Dr. J. J. M. de Groot's *Religious System of China*, especially the second volume, on which most of what is stated below is based.

During very early times, the body of the deceased was left in the dwelling of the family covered with a layer of brushwood and clay, while the living occupants of the house retired to a mourning shed hard by. Beside the corpse were placed utensils filled with food, in the hope that the spirit would return to reinhabit the body, which would then require immediate sustenance. The food consisted of scorched grain (which was thus deprived of its power of germinating), dried fish and dried meat, as these comestibles would last for a long period and be ready for instant consumption by the man or woman on reviving. The soul or spirit was also catered for in the event of its non-return to the body: special provisions were set aside in an adjoining part of the primitive dwelling, which was closed in so that animals should not be able to get at the food.

In ancient days the people no doubt lived in natural or artificial caves, especially during the winter, and from this mode of life may be traced the practice, followed subsequently, of burying

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the dead in caverns, where so many finds of bronze and pottery have been made.

Later, apparently, the dwellings of the people resembled potters' kilns of a beehive shape, being made of clay strengthened with rushes and reeds. Some of the oldest graves took a similar form, and family graveyards have been found which look like a cluster of clay beehives of large dimensions, the head ancestor reposing in the largest and most central one, surrounded by his descendants. The greater size of the oldest grave is accounted for by the fact that additions of clay were made year by year at the time of a great festival devoted to the repairing of tombs.

While in the most ancient times it seems to have been the custom to forsake the dwelling and leave it as the home of the dead for all time, in the early years of the pre-Christian era this practice was abandoned, and the final burial place was sought elsewhere, more or less elaborate graves being constructed according to the dignity of the deceased. In the case of an Emperor the mausoleum was on a magnificent scale, and Dr. de Groot gives us ¹ the following translation from the Historical Records of the mausoleum and obsequies of the great Shih Huang Ti ² of the Ch'in dynasty.

“ In the ninth month they buried Shih Huang in Mount Li. Not long after his accession to the throne this monarch had that mountain excavated and prepared, and

¹ *Religious System of China*, vol. ii, p. 399.

² See p. 31.

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when he had reduced the whole Empire to subjection, people were transferred from all parts of it to this spot, and to the number of over seven hundred thousand excavated the ground underneath three wells of ground water. Of copper they then made a crypt, and all the rare articles and precious curiosities of the palaces and the sundry offices were conveyed thither, and hoarded up inside, till the crypt was full. Mechanics were then ordered to make ballistic machines which, whenever anyone ventured too near the spot, would suddenly discharge arrows. Of water, limpid like silver, they made numerous brooks converging into a river and a great lake, and machines revolved in them, throwing out the water from one to the other. Above they arranged the stars and asterisms, and below, the configurations of the earth; they made torches of the fat of the porpoise, which were calculated to burn for a long time. Erh Shih (Shih Huang's son and successor) commanded 'It shall not be allowed to such of the inmates of the late Emperor's seraglio as have no sons, to leave the gates of the mausoleum,' and they were all made to follow him in death. Those destroyed in this wise were very numerous.

"When the coffin had been deposited in the grave, some one suggested that, whereas the workman and mechanics who had made the machines and concealed the valuables knew all about the same, the buried

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treasures might forthwith be scattered in all directions. So, when the great ceremony (*i.e.* the burial) was finished and the valuables had been stored away, the interior gate of the road leading to the tomb was closed, and the lower and exterior gates of the road were both shut too, so that none of the workmen, artisans or men who had been employed in storing away the treasures, ever came out again. Trees and shrubs were planted about the spot, to give it the appearance of a natural mountain."

The practice of burying wives with the deceased, or of immolating them at the time of interment, was strongly condemned by Confucius, but his views seem to have been ignored in the case of the burial of Shih Huang Ti, who lived and died about 250 years after Confucius. But, as will have been noticed in Chapter II, this Emperor was a law unto himself; and a man who was prepared to order the burning of all the classical books of China would not be likely to feel any compunction in ordering the destruction of a certain number of his wives, when he had no further use for them.

As a result of Confucius' precepts human sacrifice at the time of burial of the dead was discarded; and in the place of living victims, clay or wooden models of ladies and retainers were interred: Confucius did not wholly believe even in this practice, and suggested that straw images were quite sufficient, since more realistic representations might lead to a reversion to former customs.

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According to the Chinese conception, the spirit of the departed was thought to pervade the spot where the body was buried, and the food placed beside the coffin was intended for the delectation of the ghost. An amusing anecdote is related of a drunkard, which bears out this idea: a winebibber of no mean order, when on his death-bed, besought his comrades to bury him in the immediate vicinity of a potters' kiln "in order that, when my person has been converted into earth after a hundred years, I may be lucky enough to be made into a wine pot; this would really steal my heart!"

In the Han dynasty the practice of elaborate grave ceremonial and furnishings was continued; and de Groot ¹ gives a translation from the Books of the Later Han Dynasty which, after reciting the various ceremonies to be followed in the case of Imperial burials, sets out the following list of the implements for the use of the spirit:—

8 hampers, of 3 pints each, containing millet, wheat, rice, hemp seed, pulse, and small pease.

3 earthen pots, of 3 pints, containing respectively pickled meat, preserved meat and sliced food.

2 earthen liquor jars, of 3 pints, filled with must and spirits.

All these were placed upon wooden trays and covered with linen.

1 candlestick of earthenware.

8 red arrows and 1 red bow.

¹ *Op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 401.

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- 8 gablets.
- 8 tureens.
- 8 pots.
- 8 square baskets.
- 8 wine jars.
- 1 wash-basin and ewer.
- 1 staff, 1 stool and 1 canopy.
- 16 bells, 4 large bells, and 16 sonorous stones, all without stands.
- 1 ocarina, 4 flutes, 1 reed organ, 1 flute with seven holes, 1 clapper to start the orchestra and 1 signal-giver to stop it, 6 lutes, 1 cithern, 1 mouth-organ, 1 harp, 1 lute with holes.
- 1 shield and 1 lance, 1 quiver, 1 coat of mail and 1 helmet.
- 9 carriages and 36 straw images of men and horses.
- 2 cooking-stoves, 2 kettles, 1 rice-steamer, and 12 caldrons of 5 pints—everything of earthenware.
- 1 ladle made of a gourd and holding 1 pint.
- 9 tables of earthenware, 16 large cups of 3 pints and 20 smaller ones of 2 pints—all of earthenware.
- 10 rice dishes of earthenware, 2 wine-pots of earthenware holding 5 pints and 2 gourd-spoons of 1 pint.
- Sacrificial garments and clothes.

No doubt lesser lights had a simpler equipment for their ghosts, but apparently all the graves of this period, and indeed those of the T'ang dynasty, were furnished with food utensils to an extent commensurate with the affluence of the departed one.

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Another very frequent addition to the grave contents was a plentiful supply of bronze mirrors. On first thoughts it is difficult to understand the meaning of these, but the Chinese argued in this way. The spirit would need light in order to distinguish the various implements and utensils stored in the crypt. Substances which gave out light did so for only a short time and were therefore useless: but mirrors do so practically for all time. To the unscientific mind there is no real understanding of the difference between reflected light and light itself; and this accounts for the custom. The practice was continued long after more accurate knowledge of optics was obtained; but the conservative habits of the race preserved the procedure.

During the latter part of the T'ang dynasty and in the Sung epoch less lavish grave equipment was the rule. This was partly due, no doubt, to the less settled state of the country and to the frequency of robbery by bandits. De Groot, in illustration of this fact, quotes a passage¹ relating how, in the eleventh century, there were two magnates; one directed that he should be buried in rich style and the other indicated that a plain burial would be his pleasure. Both graves were rifled by robbers. The richly furnished tomb was completely gutted, but before leaving with their booty the bandits paraded before the coffin and made their obeisances. But in the other tomb only earthenware utensils were found: the enraged robbers broke open the coffin to collect the gold belt, which surely would be found

¹ *Op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 697.

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on the waist of the corpse. But finding this was made of wood, they hacked the body to pieces. Thus economical grave trappings brought about dire results !

In Ming days, Hung Wu, the illustrious founder of the dynasty, started a fashion of economy which seems to have affected grave ceremonial and equipment: wooden vessels rather than pottery utensils were used and the whole ritual appears to have been on a much more simple plan. We may therefore look for fine examples of mortuary ware dating from Han and T'ang times, for less good specimens of Sung manufacture, and for little of ceramic importance of Ming origin.

In Northern China the old grave customs have persisted to a greater extent than in the South; and in modern times mortuary ware is made in survival of the ancient practice.¹

Buddhist doctrines never seem to have gained the hold in China that we should expect, and customs arising out of that religion do not apparently form an important factor in Chinese life; though Buddhist influence in the art of the country is apparent.

Discussion of graves and burial grounds calls to mind a Chinese story, for the inclusion of which I make no excuse.

A Chinese philosopher was passing through a burial ground when he saw a young and prepossessing lady, dressed in white (the Chinese mourning colour), sitting beside a newly made

¹ See *Chinese Pottery of the Han Dynasty*, by Berthold Laufer, p. 321.

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grave which she was fanning vigorously with a fan.

He went up to her and said, "Madam, you interest me very much; will you tell me why you are fanning that grave?" The lady scowled at him and made no reply: whereupon he repeated his question, saying, "I ask out of no idle curiosity, for I am a philosopher and a student of human nature, and your action interests me immensely."

The lady again scowled at him and said nothing; so he walked on. As he was passing a bamboo grove hard by, a Chinese servant came out of it and plucked him by the sleeve, saying, "I saw you speaking to my mistress just now, and I feel sure you were asking her why she was fanning that newly made grave. The reason is this: my mistress and my master, who died a fortnight ago, were passionately devoted to each other: when my master was on his death-bed, my mistress wept and said, 'If you die, I swear I will go into a nunnery.' My master replied, 'Swear not that.' My mistress then said, 'Well, if I do not go into a nunnery, I swear I will never marry again.' My master replied, 'Swear not that, but if you must swear, swear that you will not marry again until the sods on my grave are dry.'"

CHAPTER IV

POTTERY OF THE CHOU, HAN AND OTHER PRE-T'ANG DYNASTIES

FROM study of the early history of China in Chapter II it will have been gathered that rude pottery shapes were made in the earliest times, but we cannot point to examples made of the "scarlet clay which greatly pleased the people" about the year 2360 B.C.: nor are specimens known of the vessels made of different coloured clays in the days of Emperor Yao (2357 B.C.).

Pottery utensils dating from the Chou dynasty, which held sway over the long span of years from 1122-255 B.C., are known, and specimens dating from the latter part of the Shang dynasty have been found. These dynasties are chiefly noted on the artistic side for their bronzes, but pottery was evidently made also on an extensive scale for utilitarian purposes. As we shall see shortly, during the succeeding Han dynasty an important development of ceramic art took place, but the Chou pottery was apparently simple in shape and devoid of much embellishment.

The body of the Chou vessels was made of hard grey clay which had no glaze on its surface. The pieces were usually moulded by hand, but specimens are known which exhibit signs of the use of the potter's wheel.¹

The ornamentation, such as it is, consists of hatching, and sometimes cross-hatching which produces the effect of a mass of tiny diamond-

¹ See p. 171 of *Beginnings of Porcelain*, by Berthold Laufer.

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shaped excrescences; a lozenge-shaped pattern may also be found: the hatching effect is seen on the three-footed vase depicted on Plate I. There is an interesting hexagonal vase in the Victoria and Albert Museum which is attributed to the Chou dynasty. On the sides are to be seen figures of animals and of men executed in relief in a very primitive fashion. The paste is a dark cinder-colour.

We have no series of examples which can safely be ascribed to the succeeding Ch'in dynasty (255-206 B.C.); but Mr. Laufer in his *Chinese Pottery of the Han Dynasty* refers to an important find by Mr. Chalfant¹ of a brick on which is stamped the character Ch'i. The feudal state of Ch'i was brought under complete Imperial control by Shih Huang Ti about the year 221 B.C.

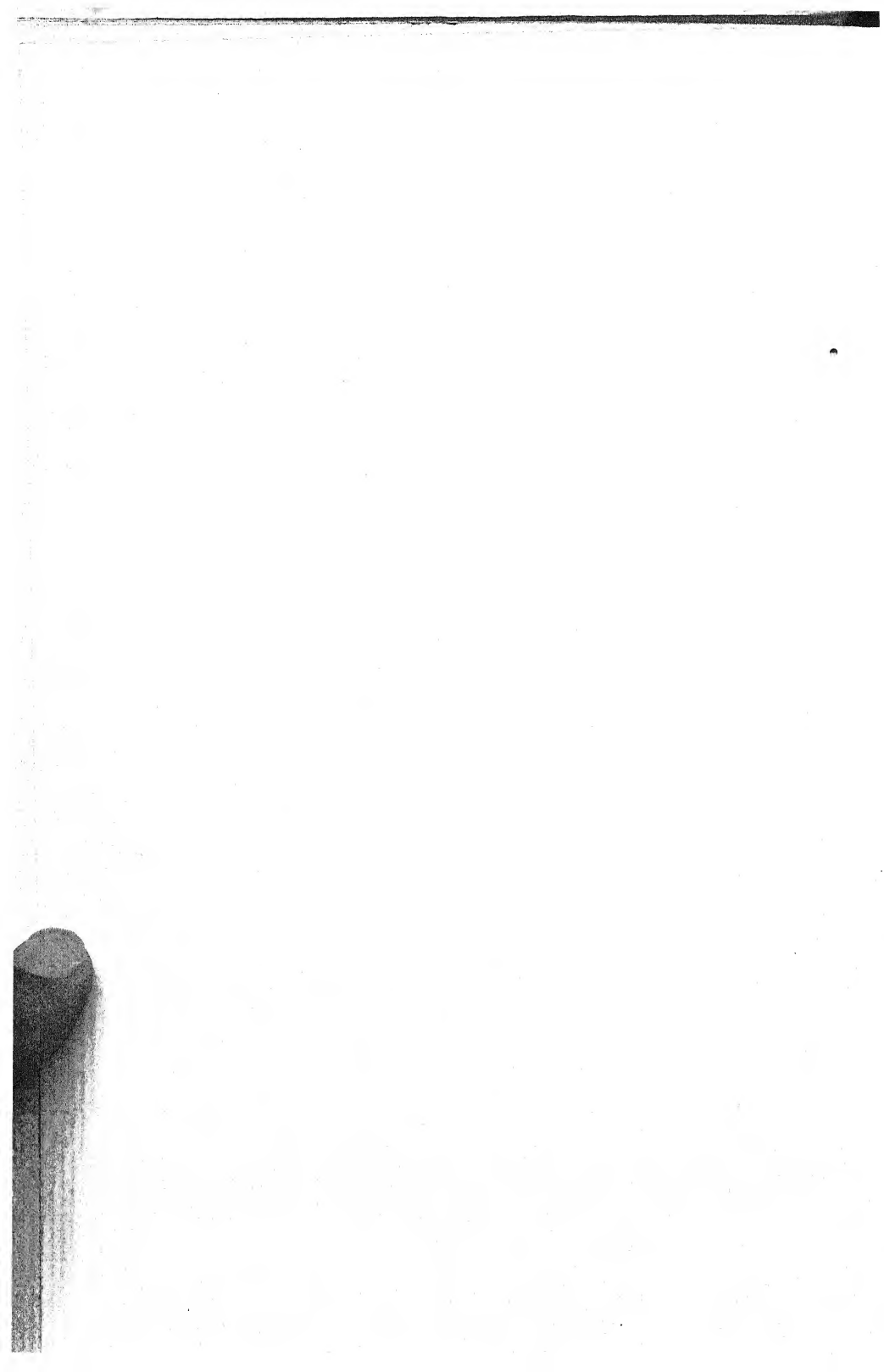
Though the examples of these very early wares do not exhibit high artistic qualities and are of little more than antiquarian interest, mention of them is necessary to prepare the way for an account of the Han wares. It is remarkable, however, that several centuries before the Christian era Chinese potters had achieved a considerable degree of proficiency in pottery manufacture. In this respect they were not, of course, ahead of the Egyptians or indeed of the Persians, who in several matters were more advanced;² but

¹ Mr. Chalfant's discoveries of Sung ware at Wei Hsien in Shantung, which are probably attributable to the Po-shan factories, are mentioned in Chapter XI.

² For instance, as Mr. Hobson points out (*Chinese Pottery and Porcelain*, vol. i, p. 9), glazes had been used from high antiquity in Egypt and are found in the Persian bricks at Susa and on the Parthian coffins.



PLATE I. TRIPOD VESSEL of dark grey pottery with hatching. 6 in. high. Chou dynasty. *Benson Collection.* (p. 56.)



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according to European standards, the Chinese potters were in the sixth form, so to speak, while the inhabitants of the British Isles were in the kindergarten stage.

The Han dynasty proper extended, as we have seen, from 206 B.C.-A.D. 25 and was succeeded by the Later or Eastern Han dynasty from A.D. 25-221. For our purposes it is not necessary to distinguish between the two epochs, though it is fairly certain that the harder and more porcellanous ware, which is attributed to the Han dynasty, had its origin in the second phase and dates from about the third century.

The Han pottery can be described in a few words so far as body and glaze are concerned. The paste is nearly always of a red colour varying from a deep to a light tone, and consists of a fairly soft faience or pottery: sometimes a cinder or ash-grey body is found, the difference in colour being no doubt due to the different clays existing in various parts of China.

The ware which seems to have been made in the latter half of the dynasty is harder and more porcellanous in its nature: generally of a dark grey colour, it gives a distinct note on percussion. While attempts have been made to establish the fact that "porcelain" was made prior to the Han dynasty, there seems considerable doubt about the matter: but the ware now under consideration certainly has many of the characteristics which would class it as "porcelain" in the Chinese sense of the word.¹ If we adopt the term

¹ See p. 102, where the question of porcelain in the Chinese and European senses of the word is discussed and where a definition of the term porcellanous stoneware is given.

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porcellaneous stoneware to describe a body which is not translucent but which has other attributes of porcelain, much of the Han ware made after the beginning of the Christian era may be classed under that category. The term proto-porcelain has been coined to describe these early bodies which gradually were improved until the substance, by which China is best known to the ordinary person, was evolved.

The view is held in this country that glaze was first used during this period, though that theory has been questioned recently¹ and the alternative suggestion made that the introduction of glaze dates from about the fifth or sixth centuries, *i.e.* shortly before the formation of the T'ang dynasty. The arguments put forward are of a negative and inconclusive character. Negative evidence in a precisely opposite direction is furnished by comparison of the Han bas reliefs and the Han pottery reliefs (see p. 67) and is rejected as equally inconclusive. Until present knowledge of the subject can be strengthened by the results of more research, it is only possible to express an opinion based upon *a priori* reasoning. We have seen that in the Han dynasty China first came into contact with Western civilization, and it is at least probable that this intercourse gave rise to the use of glaze as a means of embellishing pottery and of making it non-porous. As stated in the next chapter, there is conclusive evidence that the T'ang potters knew how to produce true porcelain and how to manipulate high-fired

¹ *Chinesische Frühkeramik*, by Dr. O. Rucker Emden.

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felspathic glazes earlier than the ninth century. The Samarra fragments (see p. 77) establish this fact. The advance in technical knowledge denoted by the manufacture of true porcelain as an alternative to the use of pottery bodies only, and by the use of high-fired felspathic glazes in frequent substitution for the low-fired lead silicate glazes, could not have been made very rapidly with the scientific knowledge possessed in those days in China. The process must have been evolved gradually, by experiments conducted by competent craftsmen, no doubt, but by men without full appreciation of the underlying scientific principles. One feels, therefore, that the Chinese must have known how to use the simpler types of glaze for a very considerable time before the early part of the T'ang dynasty. The general tendency of further research into Chinese ceramics is to antedate rather than to postdate various types of ware.

The colour of glaze employed by the Han potter, as we hold, is generally green, usually of a deep tone; but many specimens exist in which the glaze is yellow or brown, and there are examples in which a black glaze is found. Owing to long burial and consequent decomposition of the lead glaze, a wonderfully beautiful silver or golden iridescence has been imparted to it, where chemical action has taken place. The effect is striking and difficult to describe: the simile which will best help the reader, until he has seen an actual specimen, is to liken the effect to the silvery skin on the underside of a mackerel. The silvery sheen on that fish's skin,

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with its copper-gold iridescence, is not at all unlike a Han glaze decomposed by long burial and chemical action.

On the body of some of the later specimens a brown slip¹ is found with a coating of transparent glaze: this technique is interesting, as we shall find considerable use made of it in the T'ang and Sung wares. Moreover, examples will be found where the glaze has run down in streaks, to end in terminal drops short of the base of the vessel; and this feature will also be found to have its counterpart in later wares.

The typical Han pottery, however, consists of a darkish red or grey clay with a green or brown glaze washed over it more or less completely to the base, and this glaze nearly always has a silvery iridescence to a greater or less extent. The glaze is usually minutely crazed,² and it is common to find also incrustations of hardened earth adhering to the surface, due to centuries of burial.

The ware was fired in the kiln supported on "spurs," which were small projections on which the vessel rested. "Spur" marks, usually three or five in number, are found on the base of the specimen as a result. In some specimens "spur" marks are found on the mouth-rims and the flow of the glaze points to inverted firing.

While the general characteristics of body and glaze do not differ materially, a wide variety of

¹ The term slip is explained on p. 78.

² By crazing of the glaze is meant unintentional fissuring of it, in contradistinction to the artificially produced crackle of the Sung and later potters.

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shapes was used by the Han potters, and it is worth while to mention the main types, so that collectors may know what specimens they may expect to see. It will not be possible to deal exhaustively with the subject in a book of this scope, and those who are desirous of studying Han pottery deeply are directed to Mr. Berthold Laufer's treatise on the subject.¹

The Han wares were made for the actual use of the living and the supposed use of the dead. One may be struck by the artistry displayed in the decoration of the former as compared with the severe simplicity and crudeness of the latter. But there is not much cause for surprise: the living eye could appreciate and enjoy decoration and motives which the spirit might pass over; besides, the object of the grave utensils was to minister to the new corporal wants of the departed one rather than to satisfy his æsthetic taste. An analogy may be found in our own times in Rosslyn Chapel near Edinburgh, where the chancel contains such splendid works of art as the Master's and the Prentice's Pillars but the crypt consists of bare brick walls.

From what has been stated in Chapter III, the underlying idea of these grave vessels will have been realised, and we are consequently in a position to discuss both classes without further explanation, remembering that on some occasions the utensils were specially made for tomb deposit, while on others the crockery used in every-day life was placed by the coffin. The wares specially made for the use of the spirit inhabiting the tomb

¹ *Chinese Pottery of the Han Dynasty.*

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took the form of models of the implements, etc., used by the living: thus, miniature granary towers and urns, models of farm sheds and wells, with buckets standing on the rims, have been found, in addition to diminutive cooking-stoves and cooking utensils.

In connexion with these cooking arrangements, braziers of different forms were provided. These consisted of cylindrical jars in the top of which fitted a shallow bowl, perforated with holes to let the embers fall through to the bottom. Ladles or spoons are not difficult to find; these are in the shape of a spatula as a rule, but occasionally consist of a shallow oval bowl elongating into a narrow handle. The features of the bowls and dishes hardly need description, but some account must be given of the chief forms of jars and vases of the period. These vary from rather stumpy, globular receptacles with short necks to graceful vases built on a sturdy plan; an example is seen on Plate II. Many are evidently modelled on bronze shapes. Some of the most desirable have "tiger" masks through which dummy ring handles pass. The handles are not loose but are laid on the body, and serve to complete the resemblance to their bronze prototypes. The vases are also frequently decorated with bands in relief; the general nature of the ornamentation of these is described later.

There are two types of jar which require particular attention, as they are specially characteristic of Han times. They are the so-called "hill censers" and "hill jars."

We have seen that Wu Ti (140-86 B.C.), that



PLATE II. WINE JAR with green glaze showing
iridescence and with hunting scene in relief.
14 in. high. Han dynasty. *Winkworth Collection*.
(p. 62.)

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great representative of the house of Han, was strongly imbued with Taoist doctrines, and his leanings in this direction were shared by his successors in the Later Han dynasty. One of the Taoist theories was that there existed certain mountainous Isles of the Blest, on which those attaining immortality resided. To reach, therefore, these island abodes of bliss was the constant hope of Taoist believers. Scenes based upon this myth are commonly found depicted on the later porcelains, where may be seen raftloads of philosophers, priests and other Taoist notables making their precarious journey on the high seas in search of these mountainous islands, which apparently were thought to be situated somewhere in the neighbourhood of Japan. The Emperor Shih Huang Ti in the third century B.C. sent a party in search of these fairy isles under the command of a professor of magic, who took with him a troop of young men and maidens; but the expedition proved fruitless, being driven back by contrary winds.

These hill censers are called *po shan lu*, or braziers of the vast mountain, and derive their title from the shape of the cover, which resembles a mountain peak. They represent the hilly features of the Isles of the Blest. The covers may be loose or may form part of the body; in either case they are perforated so as to allow the incense smoke to issue from them. The globular bowls of the censers are placed on stems which in turn are fixed to saucer dishes. The effect is to give the idea of a hilly island surrounded by water.

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Incense was first imported into China in the Han dynasty as a result of the intercourse with the West which took place during that epoch : this fact, when coupled with the Taoist leanings of the time, accounts for the popularity of this kind of ware.

The hill jars are similar in type. They consist of cylindrical vessels resting on three feet, which are generally shaped like squatting bears. The hill jars are larger than the hill censers and the covers are boldly moulded in the shape of one or more mountains with waves lapping their bases. The bodies of the jars are often decorated in relief with typical Han motives. A specimen is illustrated on Plate III.

The purpose of these jars is not known : they could hardly have been intended for incense burning, as the covers are not perforated. Probably they were made for mortuary purposes solely and for burial with the dead, in order that their presence might facilitate transference of the departed one to the Isles of the Blest, which they represented, and so to the land of immortality and perpetual peace.

The methods of ornamentation of the Han wares and the motives employed are important to note, for it is in this dynasty that we first find a potting technique comparable with that used in later times. Moreover, an artistic feeling is displayed which, if a little crude, exhibits a boldness and directness which we can admire without making any allowance for the early date at which it was inspired.

The potter obtained his ornamental results by



PLATE III. HILL JAR with green glaze showing iridescence and with tiger-mask bosses and hunting scene. 9 in. high. Han dynasty. *Victoria and Albert Museum.* (p. 64.)

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three methods. The ware was sometimes pressed in moulds, which contained impressed designs; when the mould was removed, the design stood out in relief upon the surface of the vessel. Or a stamp was used, which produced a somewhat similar result. A third method was to make the decoration separately in a mould and then to apply the decorated strip, so made, to the body of the vessel, luting it on with moist clay. Whatever the plan adopted, the piece was then glazed, before being fired in the kiln.

The Han folk were evidently great huntsmen, for most of the motives employed are based upon hunting scenes in which men on horseback or on foot are depicted pursuing, with the help of dogs, stout quarry such as tigers and boars, besides less dangerous animals like deer and birds. Considering the time that has elapsed since these decorations were moulded, the reliefs stand out with remarkable distinctness and, while exposure to moisture and chemical influences have partly obliterated the designs, enough remains to show how strong was the art and how life-like the spirit. Hunting dogs are to be seen leaping at their prey or coursing after it *ventre à terre* : the huntsman may be seen thrusting a spear down the throat of a tiger in a more possible manner than the plan which St. George is supposed to have adopted for dealing with his dragon. The Han huntsmen seem, however, to have been in the habit of coping with mythical animals as well, because fearsome beasts with four legs and wings are found. Sometimes this type of monster is left to the mercies of

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an equally monstrous being in the form of a demon.

Domestic animals are also found modelled in pottery; verbal description is perhaps hardly necessary in the case of most of these, but some discussion of the dogs and horses, especially of the latter, is necessary to pave the way for the acquaintance we shall make of the equine figures constructed with such success in the T'ang dynasty.

The Han hunting dog was evidently of two breeds; there was the fleet greyhound type used for the pursuit of deer, and the stockier-built mastiff variety. Models of the latter type were evidently made for tomb deposit to serve as guard dogs to protect the spirit of the departed one and the tomb generally from undesirable visitors. These guard dogs are powerfully built animals with well-developed teeth, and their tails are invariably curled pug-dog fashion over their backs.

Mr. Laufer considers ¹ that the mastiff type of dog reached China through the medium of the ancient Turks; and he also points out that the Pekingese pug, or sleeve dog, so called from the position in which it was carried, was similarly of Turkish origin. These pet dogs are first mentioned in the T'ang books; and ladies who to-day have pets of this description may be interested to know that in China the same small bundles of hair and eyes delighted society some twelve or thirteen hundred years ago.

The origin and date of introduction into China

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 264.

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of the powerful horse of massive proportions are more important. About the year 138 B.C. the Emperor Wu Ti sent one of his generals, Chang Ch'ien, on an expedition to the West, but the general was captured and remained in captivity for over ten years. On his escape he brought back the cultivated grape and taught his countrymen how to make wine. During his travels in Bactria he came across the knotted bamboo which he introduced into his native country. The intercourse with Bactria, which thus took place, was no doubt instrumental in bringing to China the Bactrian horse and the Bactrian camel. The Han bas-reliefs ¹ show the powerfully-built Bactrian horse which is so different from the Mongolian pony, and we may date the introduction of this type of steed to that time; though the horse depicted on the Han pottery is of the small Mongolian breed common in China to-day and from very early times. If it were not for the evidence of the Han bas-reliefs, the absence of the Bactrian horse on the pottery reliefs would point to an earlier date than 140 B.C. or thereabouts for their production; but Mr. Laufer does not consider such negative evidence as determining. When we come to the T'ang pottery we shall find many splendid examples both of the Bactrian horse and the two-humped camel. We shall also see more striking testimony of the influence of Scythian art in that dynasty, though examples of the typical Scythian peaked cap, for instance, and of the riding costume and

¹ See *Chinese Pottery of the Han Dynasty*, p. 161, by Berthold Laufer.

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method of shooting with bow and arrow from the saddle, which were derived from Turco-Siberian sources, will be found on Han pottery. For instance, the relief ornament seen on the vase depicted on Plate II shows a horseman shooting an arrow at a charging (?) leopard from the saddle. For a most interesting account of the influence of this early Western intercourse on Chinese art in the Han dynasty the reader is directed to Prof. Fenollosa's book.¹

Between the date of the fall of the House of Han and the institution of the T'ang dynasty there is a space of nearly four hundred years, and some mention must be made of the ceramic wares which were then produced; but our information is far from satisfactory at present. In Chapter II a brief account is given of the constantly changing ruling powers which in turn held sway, and from it will be gathered that China passed through a disturbed period at that time. The settled government of the Han dynasty no longer existed, and the various warring states which successively got the upper hand had no time, if they had the inclination, to establish a social system conducive to the arts of peace.

Thus it is that we have no extensive literary record of the ceramic art of the time, and have to attribute specimens to it on rather general grounds and in a very tentative fashion. To the orderly-minded this process is vexing, for naturally enough there is a desire to fill up the lacuna with a series of accredited wares, which will

¹ *Epochs of Chinese and Japanese Art*, by E. Fenollosa, vol. i, pp. 19-27.



PLATE IV. FIGURE ON HORSEBACK. Unglazed grey-black pottery. 12 in. high. Northern Wei dynasty. *Eumorfopoulos Collection.* (p. 69.)

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connect the great Han dynasty with the equally great T'ang epoch. Specimens certainly exist which appear to be pre-T'ang and yet dissimilar from the typical Han productions, and these are assigned tentatively to one of the regimes which controlled China in part at this date. The most popular pigeon-hole in which to place these specimens is the Northern Wei dynasty (386-535). The figure on horseback illustrated on Plate IV may perhaps be ascribed to this period.

It is important to trace the influence of Buddhism in the art of this time, and in this quest we receive much assistance from Prof. Fenollosa.² On p. 33 of this book we have mentioned that Buddhism is said to have been first introduced into China by Ming Ti in A.D. 65; but a new religion takes time to root itself, and it was not till somewhere about the third century of the Christian era that Buddhism exerted any appreciable influence. Consequently, it was not until after the fall of the Han dynasty that reflection of the faith was made in artistic production: even then it was in architectural expression and in sculptural art that its influence was chiefly apparent.

Among Chinese floral motives, the lotus is typical of Buddhist India; while in the statuary of the period, apart from figures of Buddha himself, the enlargement of the ears is a noticeable Buddhist feature, especially in the Lohans. The depressed chest, symbolical of the mystical

¹ See *Epochs of Chinese and Japanese Art*, vol. i, chap. iii.

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withholding of the breath, is a further Buddhist element.

Of the different houses which held control in this inter Han-T'ang period, the Sui dynasty (589-618) was the most devoted to Buddhism, but during the division of the country between the North and South (see p. 33) Buddhist influence first began to make a real impression. The South was the section of the country that proved most susceptible to its call, partly owing to its closer proximity to Burma and India and partly to the fact that the hardier Northerners were imbued with practical rather than romantic ideals : in consequence the contemplative aspect of the religion did not find such receptive material upon which to work.

CHAPTER V

WARES OF THE T'ANG DYNASTY

WE have quoted Professor Fenollosa as expressing the view that creative effort reached its highest plane in the T'ang dynasty. Even if any of us venture to differ from that opinion, it behoves us to examine with some care the ceramic art of the time. There is no section of Chinese wares of which examples have come to Western knowledge with greater rapidity and in larger quantity in the last few years: twenty years ago we knew little or nothing of T'ang ceramic art; writing in 1902 Mr. Hippisley¹ says, "The description which has been attempted of the varieties of porcelain hitherto enumerated (*i.e.* Han and T'ang wares) possesses merely a historical interest. No specimens manufactured prior to the advent of the Sung dynasty have survived to the present day." Even twelve years ago the knowledge of the ceramic work of the T'ang dynasty was almost negligible, though Mr. Laufer in 1909 extended enormously our knowledge of the Han wares; at the present time we know more about the potter's craft from the seventh to the end of the ninth century than we do about some of the later wares.

The contents of graves and other excavated sites have furnished us with specimens covering a wide range and displaying a technique and an art which must be seen to be believed. It is doubtful whether any potter of later time could have produced the figure of the Lohan in the British Museum. The figure is forty-seven and

¹ *Ceramic Art in China*, p. 11.

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a quarter inches high, and the technical skill required to fire such a piece, without cracking it or without collapse of the clay in its plastic state, would be a triumph for a twentieth-century potter, even if he had the patience to try and do it. The remarks in the *T'ao Shao* describing certain T'ang wares seem to apply: "Endowed with the high power of the furnace, it is free from fault or crack: annealed by the joint forces of heaven and earth, it will long retain its strength." But if the potting skill is great, the grandeur of the art it displays is greater: to those who wish to realise T'ang art, I suggest that they sit and look at the figure in the British Museum for half an hour. If they do so, I think they will go away impressed.

We have seen in Chapter II how T'ai Tsung with the help of his Empress placed the country on a peaceful footing and encouraged artistic developments in all directions; and we have also noted how the notorious Wu Hou encouraged art, though her rule was cruel and exacting. These two names are perhaps the outstanding ones in the history of the T'ang dynasty; and to their encouragement of art may be attributed, no doubt, much of the ceramic excellence of the period. As was the case in the Han dynasty, intercourse with Western peoples took place, but to an even greater extent. The Empire was enlarged and trade followed the flag. Commercial prosperity brought in its train more opportunity of studying the artistic products of other countries; and the T'ang wares often bear the impress of Persian and even Greek

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influences, which are readily accounted for by Chinese history.

When we come to the Sung wares it will be found that they are discussed under their respective factory centres; but in the case of the Han ceramic products and those of the T'ang dynasty, we have not yet sufficient data to attribute them to individual factories. The specimens with which we are familiar have been taken from tombs or sanctuaries in different provinces of China; while there is some probability that they were made, as a rule, in the same locality as that in which the tombs were situated, it does not necessarily follow that this was so.

We know from literary data of the existence of a number of factories which were operating in the T'ang dynasty, and the names of the principal ones will be mentioned shortly. But there is small doubt that there was a considerable number of pottery centres dotted about all over the country, and the differences in paste and glaze furnish evidence in support of this surmise.

On the other hand, there were no "household names" associated with the T'ang wares, and such works as the *T'ao Shuo* do not describe the products of any centres comparable in reputation to the Sung factories of Ting Chou and of Lung-ch'üan, for example.

The two places which are mentioned by early writers as worthy of special attention are the factories which operated at Hsing Chou and Yüeh Chou: the first-named was in Chihli and the second in Chêkiang. The cups produced at these places when struck gave out "tones

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which surpassed those of the hanging musical stones of jade." In case the reader has a sufficiently fertile imagination to visualise the ware from Chinese descriptions, it may also be mentioned that the Hsing Chou ware "resembled silver, and was like snow"; while the Yüeh Chou product "resembled jade and was like ice." One imagines therefore that the ware of the first place was white, while that of the second was of the nature of a celadon; and the Samarra fragments referred to on p. 77 give evidence of white wares and celadon wares of T'ang manufacture.

We have less evidence "of the porcelain baked at Ta Yi, so light and yet so strong; resounding like pure jade when struck, and famed through the city of Chin." Ta Yi is in the province of Szechuan on the extreme west of the Empire.

Other T'ang factories mentioned in Chinese writings are Ting Chou,¹ Kuang-chung, and Nan-shan in Shensi; Yü-tzu Hsien and P'ing-yang Fu in Shansi; Lo Yang and K'ai-fêng Fu in Honan; Shou Chou in Anhui; Fu-liang in Kiangsi; Wu Chou and Wên-chou Fu in Chêkiang; Yo Chou in Hunan; and Kuang Chou in Kuangtung. In addition Ching-tê Chên, or Ch'ang-nan as it was then called, was beginning to make a name for itself as a ceramic centre.

The body of the T'ang wares varies considerably, as we should expect from the list of factories given above. As will be observed,

¹ Not Ting Chou in Chihli, the famous Sung factory.

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they were situated in widely separated parts of China where the clay deposits varied in content; moreover, the numerous schools of potters no doubt used different techniques, although they worked on the same general principles.

The paste is often of fine grain and soft, resembling pipeclay in consistency and appearance; this type is easily scratched with a knife. Other bodies are quite hard and cannot be scratched: they rank among the porcellaneous stonewares.¹

The colour of the body also differs: sometimes it is white, or a very pale pink; in other cases varying shades of grey are found, while red bodies are not uncommon.

The glazes used during this period were chiefly lead glazes; that is to say, lead silicate entered largely into their composition, giving them a softish consistency. These lead glazes in process of time undergo chemical changes if exposed to appropriate conditions, decomposing to a certain extent and assuming an iridescence: they are also apt to flake off, with the result that we often find bare patches on the glazed portions of specimens, so that the body is exposed. In all cases the glaze is thinly applied and quite different from the thick skins put on the Sung wares. On the other hand, the glaze was allowed to run down the vessels, and terminal drops are found in consequence, but these are not like the treacly Sung finishes.

A feature of the T'ang glazes is the wavy line

¹ For what is meant by porcellaneous stoneware, see p. 102.

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in which they finish short of the base. As in the case of the Han glazes, crazing of the glaze is found, but this is not intentional and is quite different from the artificial crackles sometimes imparted by the Sung potters. The crazing is natural and due to the soft glaze fissuring by age.

The T'ang potters used a greater variety of glaze colours than did the Han potters. The chief were yellow and green; but brown, blue, purple and black were also employed. The yellow is usually of a rich tone but is sometimes very pale, and little more than a creamy-white or straw colour. The green is a leaf green which also shows a wide range of tones; the brown ranges from an amber yellow at one end of the scale to dark brown at the other. The blue, which is much less common, is a dark but bright blue. In addition to the hard-fired black glaze mentioned below, the T'ang potter also employed red and black colours which are not, strictly speaking, glazes at all, but pigments applied to the ware and unfired in the kiln. Black painted ornamentation under a transparent green glaze can be found, and in these examples we find the earliest evidence of under-glaze painting. The T'ang potter was obviously familiar with the use of the high-fired felspathic glazes which were so much exploited in the Sung dynasty. The colours of these are white, brown, black and various shades of celadon green. As would only be natural, these high-fired glazes are found on porcellaneous bodies.

The view has been held for some time that the T'ang potter was probably master of the

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production of a true porcelain; but, until certain excavations in Mesopotamia were made, there was no definite proof of this. The discoveries of Professors Sarre and Herzfeld of Berlin at Samarra furnish definite evidence.

The town of Samarra on the Tigris was founded in A.D. 838 and was the capital of the Caliphate until about 883, when it was abandoned and fell into ruins. From the buried remains of the town fragments of Chinese ceramic wares have been retrieved. These consist of white porcelain, glazed in very similar fashion to the Ting wares described in Chapter IX, and of several kinds of celadon ware. The majority of the specimens are portions of bowls and dishes, often fashioned with foliate rims and lobed sides; other fragments appear to be parts of vases or ewers. The base finishes vary from the typical flat T'ang bases to the hollowed-out bases with foot-rims which are characteristic of the Sung wares; some have sand adhering to them. The glaze is a gummy white remarkably like the Ting yao glaze, and presents the same "tear-drop" appearance where the glaze has run more thickly. The celadon specimens vary in colour from a typical Sung celadon to the olive-green associated with the Northern Chinese celadons (see Chapter X). In a few instances there is evidence of incised decoration having been used. A less well-defined group consists of a coarser porcellaneous ware with a creamy white glaze which is often crazed.

The importance of these fragments lies in the proof they furnish that the manufacture of true

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porcelain and the use of high-fired glazes was sufficiently well established in China in the ninth century to ensure an export trade in such ware as far afield as Mesopotamia; and consequently it is fair to assume that the knowledge of the way to make true porcelain was ~~the~~ the possession of the Chinese potter at a distinctly earlier date. On Plate V will be seen a small bottle with pear-shaped body moulded in five lobes. The body is porcelain with an ivory white glaze which has formed in places in brownish drops. This specimen shows the characteristic features displayed by the Samarra fragments.

The evidence thus afforded of T'ang porcelain needs to be used with caution, for there is the danger in consequence of antedating a great deal of Sung porcelain of the Ting type and of giving a wrong attribution to some of the celadon wares. Before specimens of the kind can be confidently rated as T'ang, the form must be carefully considered and the general technique taken into account. The T'ang potter had not probably achieved so complete a mastery of potting technique as his successor, and his work was no doubt of a more primitive type.

On the other hand, the T'ang potter knew most of the essentials of his craft. He was evidently fully conversant with the usefulness of a "slip." The term "slip" implies a fluid mixture of clay and water which may be variously coloured; it is quite opaque, but when a transparent glaze is superimposed, a brilliant, coloured, glaze-like effect is produced.

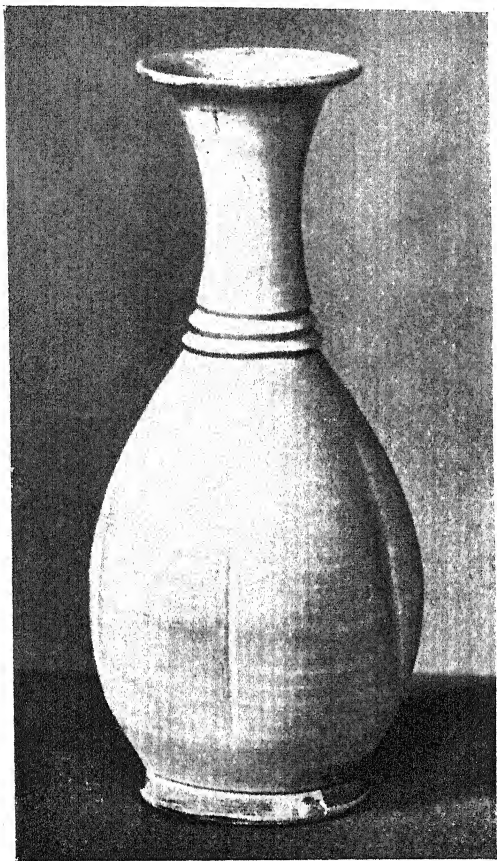
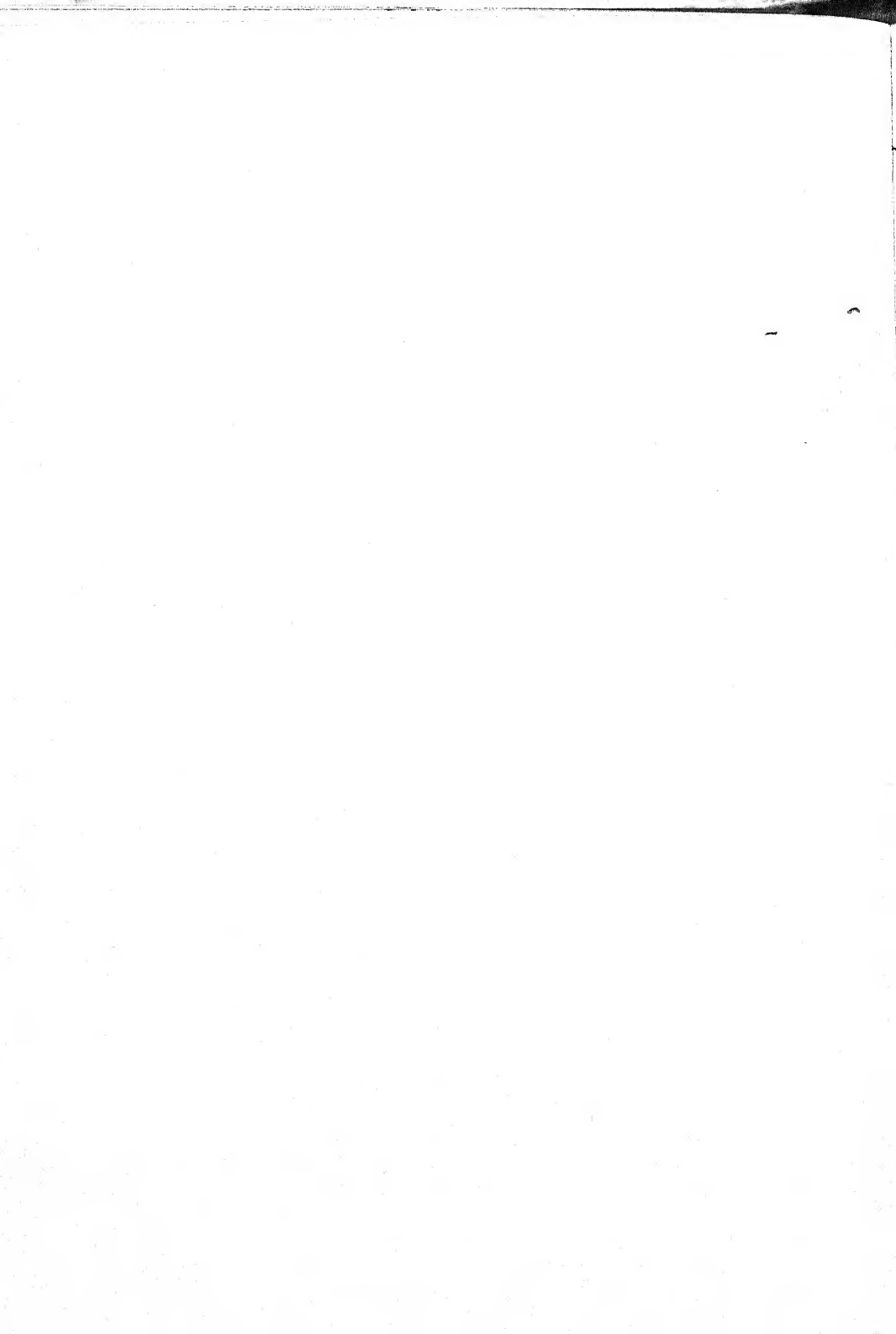


PLATE V. PORCELAIN BOTTLE with white
glaze and lobed sides. $5\frac{1}{4}$ in. high. Tang
dynasty. *Alexander Collection.* (p. 78.)



WARES OF THE T'ANG DYNASTY

The T'ang potter, moreover, worked with different coloured clays for the bodies of his wares, and so it is that we find such a range of methods employed in the decoration of the period. A vase might be built of a red clay; a thin white slip might then be washed over it. Through the slip a design might be etched or carved, so that the red body showed up the decoration in white; the whole vessel would then be covered with a transparent and almost colourless lead glaze, producing an effect analogous with the technique of the Tz'ü Chou potters described in Chapter XI. Before the slip was covered with glaze, different coloured oxides were sometimes washed on, so that a white flower may be seen set among green leaves on a yellow background.

In all cases the work of the artist is distinguished by its boldness and, though rough in its execution, the design is invariably conceived on large lines, in a spirit indicative of a matured art.

The T'ang potters occasionally used mixed clays with which to build the bodies of their vessels, so that an agate-like appearance was created; and the vessels, if broken, show the different coloured clays throughout the body. Layers of grey and red clay were blended until a suitable stratification was achieved; the vessel was then moulded and covered with a green or yellow glaze, which gave the red veining an almost black colour. An example is seen on Plate VI, fig. 1. A different marbled effect was produced by dressing a red ware with a white slip or by using a mixed coloured slip; in such cases the agate-like effect is only superficial,

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and on fracture the marbling is seen to stop at the surface and not to persist throughout the body as is the case with the type just mentioned.

The potter's wheel was the constant ally of the T'ang potter and the vases and bowls show evidence of its use. As a rule the bases of the T'ang vessels are flat and do not finish in foot-rims as is the case in the Sung wares: sometimes, though not invariably, the circumference of the base is slightly bevelled, and concentric rings caused by the potter's wheel are often found on the bases.

The figures, which will be described in some detail shortly, were made in a mould, and the seams are sometimes visible on the figures; in the larger models the bodies of the figures are hollow. The fact that a mould was responsible for the production of the fine models of men, horses, camels and other animals has given an opportunity to the forger. It is not difficult to make a mould from a genuine T'ang figure and thereafter to produce pottery figurines which are extremely difficult to distinguish from the originals; in fact where no glaze is employed, detection is more than difficult. Where, however, the copy has subsequently been glazed, its modernity is more apparent, because the glaze has not had twelve hundred years in which to mature under chemical action.

Another point on which the collector must keep an eye is modern repair of T'ang figures. In their excavation, heads and limbs get detached from bodies, and the Chinese restorer puts the figures together again with the head or arms of

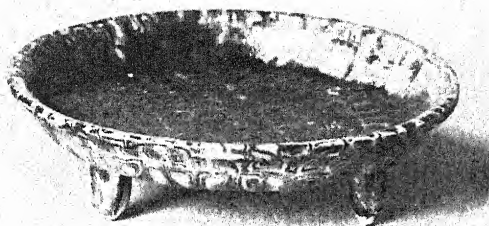


PLATE VI. Fig. 1.—DISH made with mixed clays.
6 in. diameter. T'ang dynasty. *Eumorfopoulos*
Collection. (p. 79.)



Fig. 2.—EWER with spout in shape of animal's head, green
glaze. 5 in. high. T'ang Dynasty. *Alexander Collection.*
(p. 82.)

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one model on the body of another, or else replaces a missing limb with one of modern manufacture.

I have seen an example of the "restorer's" ingenuity in which a broken T'ang model had been mended and added to so as to produce a new type. The foot of a figure was made to serve as the body of a duck!

The T'ang shapes are a continuation of, or a development from, those used in the Han dynasty with which the reader is now generally familiar. The majority of the specimens seen are mortuary wares obtained from tombs, and they comprise accordingly the utensils and vessels deposited therein for the use of the spirits of the departed. But we do not see the miniature cooking stoves, the granary urns, the hill jars, or the other Han grave equipment to anything like the same extent: the mortuary wares seem to comprise either figures or vessels for the reception of food. The figurines will be discussed later because they form perhaps the most important and striking item in the T'ang potter's catalogue. The food vessels generally consist of sets of cups placed on a tray, and glazed in the distinctive green and yellow splashed style. Vases for holding liquids were also placed by the coffin, and these take various forms, all of which are simple but of good proportions: the mouth and lip may be crinkled by bending the paste downwards at five or six points before the glaze was applied. Funeral vases may be of more or less elaborate forms, with figures in applied relief encircling the elongated neck and with incised decoration embellishing the body, the whole being covered

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with an opaque greenish-grey glaze. It was evidently one of these vases (now in the Victoria and Albert Museum) which Dr. Bushell mistook for a specimen of Ju yao, being led astray by the inscription on the stand of the piece, which read "Kuan-yin vase of Ju Chou porcelain."

Pilgrim bottles, ewers (of which an example is seen on Plate VI, fig. 2) and wine jars with double handles terminating in dragon or serpent heads were other forms executed by the T'ang potters.

A considerable advance in technical skill over that displayed in the Han dynasty is shown. The applied reliefs are in some respects more ambitious, and incised decoration and stamped designs are to be found. The motives show the result of intercourse with the West. Certain bird forms indicate a Persian origin, and a Greek influence can be recognised not only in some of the decoration but in the shapes of the vases themselves. For instance, the amphora vase illustrated on Plate VII is distinctly Greek in its shape.

The T'ang figures furnish a most important section of the early potter's work: not only do they provide examples of his skill in the matter of technique, but the art they display is extraordinarily mature. If we had not been prepared from the study of Chinese history to expect signs of an advanced culture, it would have been difficult to believe that the figures were made in the seventh to the ninth centuries.

It is important to bear in mind the support given to Buddhism in the T'ang dynasty, for it accounts largely for the strong Buddhist inspiration exhibited in the pottery of the period.

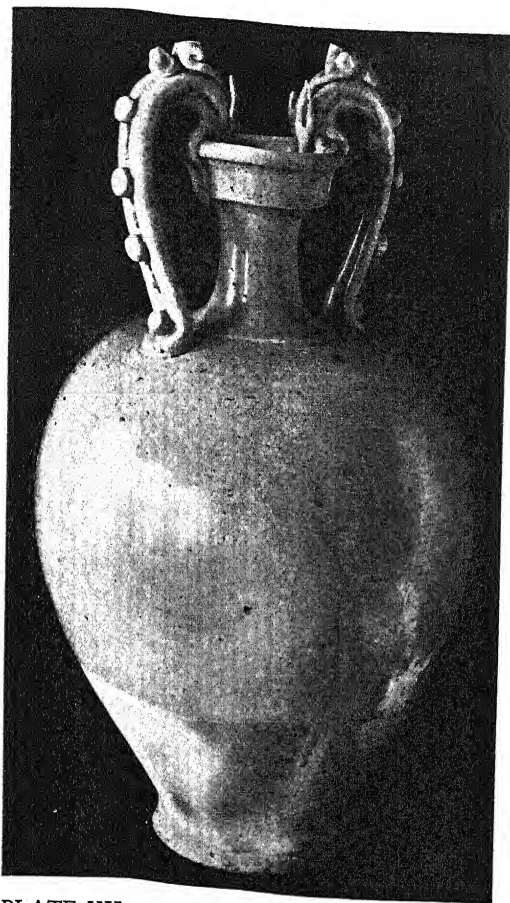


PLATE VII. AMPHORA with serpent handles,
straw yellow glaze stopping short of base.
15 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. high. T'ang dynasty. *Baird Collec-*
tion. (p. 82.)

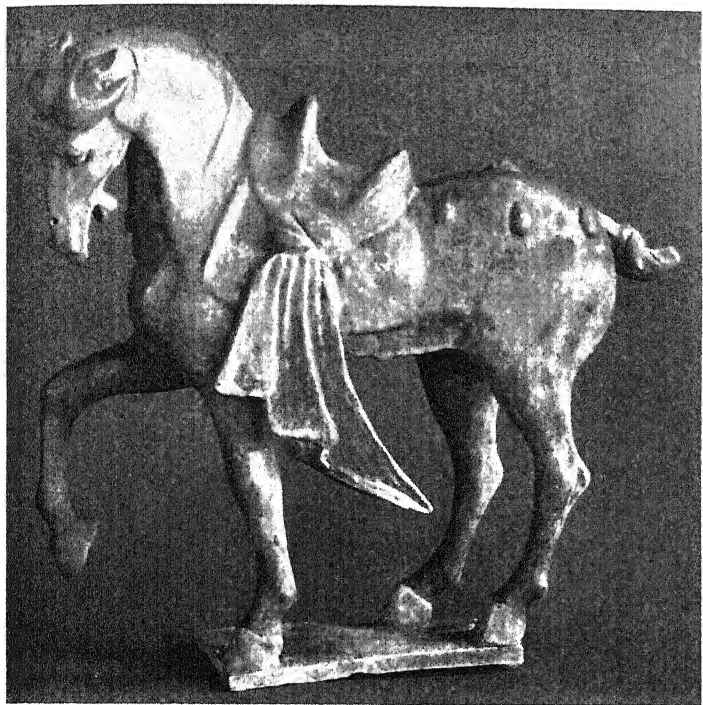


PLATE VIII. CAPARISONED HORSE pawing the ground. Buff pottery with yellow glaze. 15 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. high. T'ang dynasty. *Benson Collection.* (p. 83.)

WARES OF THE T'ANG DYNASTY

Reference has already been made to the great figure of the Lohan in the British Museum, which is a striking example of the same religious influence. Collectors may find it useful to have an explanation of these Lohans.¹ There were eighteen disciples of Buddha, who became deified missionaries or apostles, and who were called Lohans in China (Arhat in Sanskrit, Rakan in Japanese). The original eighteen—there were only sixteen in the earliest days—had lesser personages added to their number; and in large temples five hundred Lohans, each with some distinguishing attribute, may be found.

The animals portrayed by the T'ang potter are perhaps the most interesting and those which display the highest artistic sense. Of these, the horses and camels deserve special attention. The camel is of the Bactrian variety with two humps; the one-humped variety will never be found in T'ang figures. Specimens may be met in which bundles of merchandise are slung between the humps, giving the effect of one, but examination will show the presence of the two humps.

If the camels are fine, the horses are still more splendid: a beautiful example is shown on Plate VIII. The Bactrian horse is quite different from the Mongolian pony which appears in the Han pottery reliefs. The former is immensely more powerful; the muscle development on the chest and haunches is very marked, but the fetlocks and feet are slender. To those of my readers who are horse lovers, these figures will make a strong appeal. In the T'ang dynasty

¹ Lohan means worthy, excellent.

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riding was no doubt a popular pursuit, and the Chinese of that time were apparently good judges of a horse, from the evidence furnished by the life-like modelling bestowed upon the figures by the potters.

As we have noted already, the introduction of the Bactrian horse into China dates from 138 B.C., the date of Chang Ch'ien's expedition to the West. Importation soon encouraged the formation of breeding establishments over the country, and studs of these fine animals were, no doubt, the proud possession of the rich. Good specimens of these horse models are not difficult to acquire, either glazed or unglazed; but they fetch a fair price, fair in every sense of the word, for they are great works of art. As a rule the body is hollow to lessen the difficulties of the potter in the moulding and firing.

The ladies appear as tall slender figures very often dressed in elaborate costumes; long sleeves and high-waisted flowing draperies are distinctive features of their apparel, and ornaments in the form of necklaces add to their distinction. The coiffure is characteristic, as the hair is often made up into a pyramidal shape or else twisted round the head in a thick coil with a "bun" in the centre. In all cases the feet are natural and the cramped foot of later times is not to be found in these figures.¹

¹ The date of introduction of foot-binding is not known, but it has been attributed to one Imperial concubine or another ten or fifteen centuries ago. The practice was forbidden by K'ang Hsi in 1664, but the prohibition was withdrawn four years later. See *Encyclopædia Sinica*, p. 186, by S. Couling.



PLATE IX. ACTOR. Red pottery with white slip.
11 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. high. T'ang dynasty. *British Museum.*
(p. 85.)

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Some of these female figures represent musicians with instruments in their hands. As they are found as items in the grave furniture, presumably they were buried for the amusement of the departed: we have noted on p. 51 the fact that orchestral equipment was included in the list of articles for the tomb described in the Books of the later Han dynasty.

The male figures vary considerably. Often they represent Western sojourners with faces very unlike the Chinese—the costumes are also somewhat un-Chinese in many cases: a not uncommon headdress found on these models can be derived from Turco-Siberian sources. Sometimes, as seen on Plate IX, figures of actors are found.

The internal conditions of the country during the intermediate period between the T'ang and the Sung dynasty were not such as to encourage peaceful arts on any large scale; but, just prior to the formation of the Sung dynasty, the famous Ch'ai ware was made. This porcelain was named after the Emperor Shih Tsung of the family of Ch'ai, and mention of it will be found in the next chapter.

The main ceramic output of these fifty odd years probably did not differ materially from that of the T'ang dynasty, and we have little evidence on which to attribute specimens dating from those days. Mr. Eumorfopoulos possesses a vase with a black glaze of the Chien type, which has a mark of the Posterior Chou period; but, since the mark has been cut at a date subsequent to the firing of the piece, no reliable evidence is

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afforded by it, beyond the fact that someone centuries ago thought it was of that date.

Probably we shall always experience great difficulty in establishing the special characteristics (if any) of the wares of these minor supremacies; they were too short-lived to provide a substantial literature, and of the tombs excavated the percentage which belongs to them must necessarily be a small one. In a book written in the tenth century¹ reference is made to magnificent banquet services which contained several hundred pieces, large and small, requiring table space of thirty feet square to accommodate them. These services were made during the Five Dynasty epoch, but we have only this literary evidence of them.

¹ The *Ch'ing-yi-lu*, by T'ao Ku, quoted in the *T'ao Shuo*, Book VI.

CHAPTER VI

JU YAO AND SOME RELATED WARES

UNTIL recently the ware made at Ju Chou in Honan, though well known from literary references, could only be imagined. Even now we have no authenticated specimen to which we can point and state that it was the product of this famous factory, founded in the Sung dynasty by Imperial order.

The chief literary references to Ju ware are the following. The *Ko-ku-yao-lun* (a fourteenth-century work) speaks of it as a porcelain with a pale green or blue glaze with or without crackle, and with a paste which is thin and has a rich lustre. The *Po-wu-yao-lan* (a seventeenth-century work) describes the glaze as white in colour as the fluid white of an egg and as rich as a film of fat.¹ The same work says that in the glaze there are pores as in cones barely disclosing themselves and resembling crab claws. At the bottom there are tracings of sesamum finely chiselled.² The *Liu-ch'ing-jih-cha* (compiled by a Ming writer) speaks of the ware as resembling

¹ This is Eitel's translation. Bushell translates "whitish like an egg-shell in tint with a thick, transparent glaze, resembling a deep layer of lard."

² This again is Eitel's translation. Bushell translates "the glaze exhibits a palm-leaf veining with some resemblances to crab's claws. At the bottom there are sesamum flowers and small fine nails." The passage seems obscure in meaning if the foregoing translation is correct, for the object of putting nails into the body is unintelligible and there would be technical difficulties in the subsequent firing. It is interesting to note, however, that in certain seventeenth- and eighteenth-century crackled, celadon dishes, there are brown spots embedded in the glaze. These spots give the appearance of rusty nail-heads and have been added intentionally, possibly to carry out the idea of this passage.

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Ko porcelain in colour but with a slight yellowish tinge. This work also states that similar ware was made at T'ang Chou, Têng Chou and Yao Chou. The two first-mentioned towns are in Honan and the last in Shensi.

In the *T'ao Shuo*, where the foregoing references are included, there is the statement that the glaze was made with powdered cornelian. This is not the only reference to this stone in the *T'ao Shuo*; it is also mentioned in connexion with the production of the famous red of the Hsüan Tê period (1426-1435). Cornelian consists largely of silica, the presence of which in large quantities would produce a glaze requiring a high temperature to melt it. The statement would therefore point to the fact that the Ju type of glaze was one of the high-fired glazes commonly found in the Sung wares and would be associated with a body of a highly porcellanous nature.

Another reference in ancient literature which it is important to note is the statement of one, Hsü Ching, who went to Corea with the Chinese embassy in 1125, and who, among his other occupations, wrote a description of the local ceramic wares. Hsü Ching likens some of the Corean wares to the "new Ju Chou ware." The Corean wares of this period are fairly familiar and most of them are of a celadon nature. They vary from grey-green to a bluish celadon, and some are very pale, almost white in colour with a tinge of blue or green.

All this rather heterogeneous evidence from Chinese literature may perhaps be summarised thus: the Ju ware was thinly potted with a fine

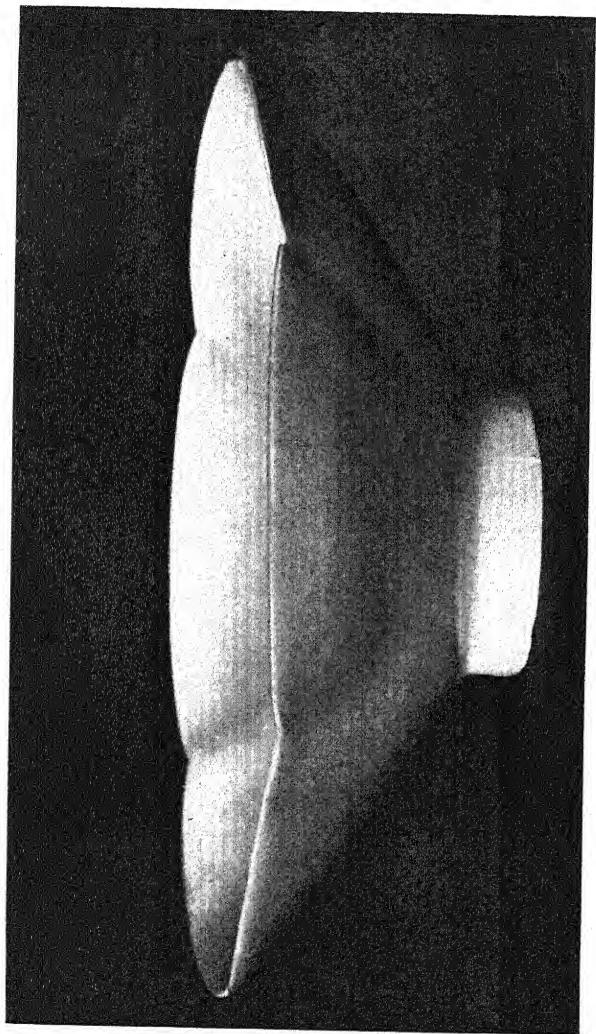


PLATE X. *Ying ch'ing* : BOWL of fine porcelain with white glaze, faintly blue. $5\frac{1}{4}$ in. diam. Sung dynasty. *Oppenheim Collection*. (p. 90.)

JU YAO AND SOME RELATED WARES

porcellaneous body fired at a high temperature. The glaze was a siliceous one maturing at a high temperature with a lard-like appearance and greenish or bluish in colour; sometimes it was crackled. In addition to being made at Ju Chou in Honan, a similar type of ware was produced at two other factories in Honan, at one in Shensi and at factories in Corea.

In Hsiang's Album¹ there are specimens illustrated which are attributed to the Ju Chou factory. The first is a trumpet-shaped vase engraved with palm leaves and scrolled design, and covered with a bluish-green glaze. Hsiang says it was bought for about £50 by a general in the Emperor's body-guard. The second is a beaker-shaped vase with a bluish uncrackled glaze and was the possession of another high Chinese official. The third is a most wonderfully elaborate wine-ewer in the shape of a duck. The glaze is also represented as bluish-green, but in this case it is crackled.

Having marshalled our literary data for what it is worth, we must see whether there is an early type of ware which accords at all with these descriptions. There is always a danger in making a favourite theory fit in with facts, unconsciously arranged for the purpose. The theory² advanced below must be accepted with reserve, but is generally recognised now to be worthy of tentative acceptance.

¹ *Porcelain of Different Dynasties*, by Hsiang Yüan-pien, translated by S. W. Bushell.

² The matter was explored at length in the first instance by Mr. George Eumorfopoulos in a paper read before an Oriental Ceramic Society in July 1922.

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In the last few years a not inconsiderable number of specimens has been imported into this country from China styled *ying ch'ing* ware. This expression signifies a ware with a misty or shadowy blue (or green) glaze.

The body, which varies in thickness considerably, is fine porcelain: in colour the paste ranges from a yellowish orange colour (showing the presence of iron) to a white colour. The porcelain on fracture shows a white sugary appearance. In the thinnest examples the body is highly translucent, and even in the thicker types some translucency may be observed. The porcelain is finer than in any of the Sung wares with which we are at present familiar. A choice example is shown on Plate X: it is a shallow conical bowl with lightly moulded sides and mouth-rim cut in six foliations. The porcelain body is of egg-shell thinness and the glaze is white with a faint tinge of blue.

The *ying ch'ing* glaze is a high-fired felspathic one which varies in colour from being almost colourless (showing white against the porcelain of the body) to a distinct light blue. Where the glaze has run thick or accumulated at indentations of the body or over incised decoration, the colour is bluish or greenish, even when the glaze on the other parts of the vessel appears white. There is no reason to presume that this colour is due to anything but iron, or any necessity to surmise the addition of other colouring material.

This *ying ch'ing* ware is found in many shapes. Bowls and saucers are perhaps the commonest form, but vases and ewers are by no means rare.



PLATE XI. *Ying ch'ing* : BOWL of fine porcelain and pale bluish glaze, with archaic dragons. $4\frac{1}{4}$ in. diam. Sung dynasty. *Author's Collection*. (p. 91.)

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More varied still are the types of body. Some are quite thick, while in the finest examples the ware is almost as thin as vellum. The decoration consists of floral or animal designs incised in the paste in typical Sung fashion, or moulded in relief in a manner reminiscent of some of the Ting yao. Very occasionally the glaze is spotted with brown derived from ferric oxide, like the *tobi seiji* or spotted celadon (see p. 134). In other specimens, and these are some of the most beautiful, fine potting and delicacy of shape constitute their claim for appreciation.

Very often the bowls have been fired on their mouth-rims, upside down, and sometimes the raw rim is hidden by a metal collar as is so often the case in the Ting yao.

These specimens, which have recently been imported, are said to have been dug up from tombs in Honan; some have been found in Corea; while others have been discovered in a buried city at Külühsien in Chihli. A few of the choicest examples are reported to have been obtained from private Chinese collections. Plate XI shows another example of this ware. It is a small bowl of very thinly potted and highly translucent porcelain with a pale bluish glaze. Inside are two finely carved archaic dragons and waves. The mouth-rim is unglazed and bound with metal and the base is glazed with the foot-rim trimmed to a sharp edge.

The question then arises whether this *ying ch'ing* ware can be said to be of the Ju type. It is understood that certain Chinese connoisseurs hold this view and, while the reader is left to form

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his own opinion, there is strong probability that some connexion exists between the two. There is nothing diametrically opposed between the literary description and the best of the specimens we have seen. Evidence exists that several factories in China and Corea produced types of ware similar to that of Ju Chou, and the examples to hand vary greatly in quality and technique and come from widely different localities. But the strongest evidence of all, in the view of many students, is the absence of any account in Chinese literature of a Sung ware of the quality of this *ying ch'ing* ware except in the description of Ju yao and its related wares. The opinion held by most ceramists at the present time is that the *ying ch'ing* ware is of the Ju type, but only the more optimistic of collectors label their specimens of the ware as Ju yao itself.

Related to the Ju yao is the Ch'ai yao. This ware is not named after the place of manufacture, which was apparently K'ai-fêng Fu or at Chêng Chou, close to that town; but after the family name of the Emperor Shih Tsung in whose reign Ch'ai porcelain was first made (see p. 37). It is described "as blue as the sky after rain, as clear as a mirror, as thin as paper and as resonant as a musical stone of jade." It is also stated that the ware often had yellow clay at the foot. Probably this referred only to the yellow colour of the paste where exposed to the fire which would be accounted for by the presence of iron in the clay. Incidentally it may be noted that a number of *ying ch'ing* specimens have a yellowish foot-rim.

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The ware was produced at the close of the short interval that occurred between the T'ang and Sung dynasties, and it was to emulate this ware that the potters of Ju Chou were striving. In the seventeenth century fragments are said to have been mounted in buckles and set as jewels, so rare and precious were they. This being the case, even the most optimistic among collectors will probably inform only their less knowledgeable friends that their best piece of *ying ch'ing* is an example of Ch'ai yao, however much they may cherish secret hopes on the subject !

Allusion must finally be made to the conjectural products of the Yüeh Chou factories, for here again we have no authenticated specimen to help us. Yüeh Chou is in the province of Chêkiang, not very far from Hang Chou. The factory was operating in the T'ang dynasty, and if we place full credence upon the literary description of the ware, the porcelain produced must have been as fine in quality as that made in much later times. The cups and bowls of Yüeh Chou form themes for poets from the fourth century, a fact which points to establishment of the factory at a date even earlier than the T'ang dynasty. In the Southern Sung dynasty the place of manufacture was apparently moved to Yü-yao Hsien, which is also in the province of Chêkiang.

CHAPTER VII

KUAN YAO

IN practically every case the wares of the Sung and Yüan dynasties are known by the name of the centre where the factory was situated; but we have to consider in the present chapter an important class which derives its title from no particular place of manufacture. Kuan means Imperial or official; and Kuan yao signifies ware made for Imperial or official use. It follows that it might have been produced at different Imperial or Imperially subsidised factories, and the term could be used in connexion with ware of different dates. We have ample evidence that this was so, but the Imperial ware of the Sung dynasty is sometimes distinguished from that made later by the prefix Ta (Great); so named after the Ta Kuan period (11107-11110). We have no record of the word being applied generically to wares earlier than the Sung epoch.

From our study of Chinese history in Chapter II, the name of the Sung Emperor Hui Tsung is familiar as one of the great patrons of art, and it was in his reign that the Imperial kilns at K'ai-fêng Fu—the capital of the Sung dynasty proper—were established. Hui Tsung was the last representative of his House to rule at K'ai-fêng Fu, and the production of Kuan yao there was limited to a period of twenty years. The kilns were established about 1107, and the flight of the court across the Yang-tze took place, as we have seen, in 1127.

When the Southern Sung dynasty was formed

KUAN YAO

with its seat of government at Hang Chou, new factories were established in its immediate vicinity; for we learn from the *T'ao Shuo* that, under the Directorship of Shao Ch'êng-chang, kilns were set up at the Hsiu Nei Ssü,¹ the products of which were known in consequence as Nei yao as well as Kuan yao. Another writer quoted in the same work states that these Imperial kilns were situated under the Phoenix Hill, which is in the vicinity of Hang Chou. A third Chinese authority speaks of "new potteries built later beneath the Altar of Heaven which were also called Kuan potteries, but the porcelain produced here differed widely from the old ware."

We thus have literary evidence of three centres of production of this Imperial or official ware in the Sung dynasty, two in or near Hang Chou and one at K'ai-fêng Fu; and there is little reason to suppose that the factories at Hang Chou did not continue their output during the Mongol regime. But there is more difficulty in determining what constituted the characteristic products of these kilns.

We should naturally expect that, as the potters from K'ai-fêng Fu were moved down with the court to Hang Chou when the Emperor fled before the Chin Tartars, the style and general technique of the Kuan yao would be the same;

¹ Mr. Waley tells me that the *hsiu nei ssü* was the office of an official of the nature of a surveyor who was responsible for keeping the palace of the Emperor in repair. The office had nothing to do with the making of pottery or porcelain, and the setting up of kilns within its precincts was a matter of accidental convenience.

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but, as the clay was drawn from an entirely different locality, there would probably be some difference in the body-paste of the ware made in Honan (K'ai-fêng Fu) and of that produced in Chêkiang (Hang Chou).

The *T'ao Shuo* gives no description of the colour of the body of the K'ai-fêng Fu ware, but it quotes the *Po-wu-yao-lan*¹ as stating that the Hang Chou ware was made from a porcelain-earth which was brown; and which caused the brown mouth and iron foot, so often spoken of in connexion with the early wares. The brown mouth is explained by the fact that the glaze, running thinly at the top of the vessels in its downward course, allowed the colour of the body below to show through; while the more pronounced colour on the exposed foot was no doubt caused by the heat of the kiln.

If the statement of the *Po-wu-yao-lan* is to be taken as signifying a difference of colour in the clays used in the two groups of Kuan yao, we must assume that the K'ai-fêng Fu wares possessed a lighter coloured body than the Hang Chou products. Some confirmation of this surmise is given by comparison with the body of the Chün yao; Chün Chou was not far from K'ai-fêng Fu and the paste of its wares is not very dark in colour. The bodies of both groups of Kuan yao are of a porcellanous nature and give a clear ring on being struck.

The colour of the glaze is evidently what gave the ware its beauty, and the text of Hsiang's Album furnishes accounts of the various colour

¹ *T'ao Shuo*, Book II.

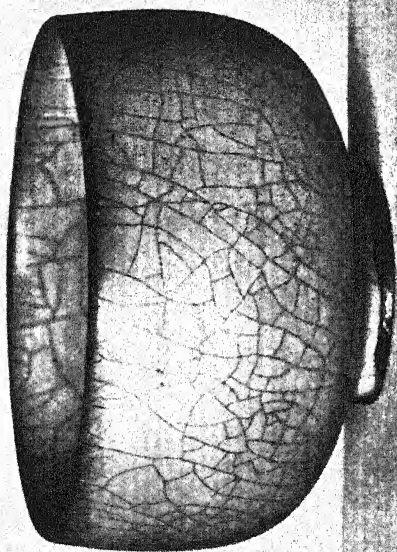


PLATE XII. Kuan yao: BOWL with crackled lavender-grey glaze. $4\frac{1}{2}$ in. diam. Sung dynasty. *David Collection*. (p. 97.)

KUAN YAO

tones exhibited by the Kuan glazes. Ten specimens are there described: all have applied to them that elusive word *ch'ing*, which implies a blue or green colour. The word is qualified by other epithets, which place emphasis on the bluish nature of the glaze rather than on the green tone. We may perhaps assume, therefore, that the colour of the opalescent glaze was a pale lavender as a rule, with specimens of dove-grey at the one extreme and with brighter blues and definite greens¹ at the other. Examples fitting in with this somewhat wide range of colour tones can be found, which also have certain other characteristics, typical of what is generally classified as Kuan yao. One of these is the presence of a blob of glaze inside the foot-rim, but it seems a somewhat unimportant point on which to lay much stress. It would not exercise the wits of a very ordinary potter to fill the foot-rim partially in this way; but the feature is mentioned because it seems characteristic of many of the specimens known to us. Its presence or absence cannot, however, be regarded as more than additional evidence of secondary importance. Some of the specimens are crackled and some are not. A specimen of what may be Kuan ware is shown on Plate XII.

Some specimens, which exhibit the characteristics of Kuan ware as we know it, have splashes of purple or red like the Chün yao described in the next chapter. Occasionally

¹ One of the colours is described by a Chinese writer as *ta lü*, or deep green.

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these splashes of colour take a definite form and look as if they had been controlled.¹

Although six out of the ten specimens figured in Hsiang's Album possess engraved ornamentation of a fairly simple character, we have no other literary evidence that embellishment in relief, or by etching with a fine point, was practised in the Imperial kilns, as it was for instance at the Lung-ch'üan factories. The main output evidently consisted of high-class glaze effects for the scholar's table or for the cabinet of the art connoisseur.

Related wares appear to have been made at Yü-hang Hsien and Yü-yao Hsien; both places are not far from Hang Chou, and some of the specimens which have come down to us may owe their origin to these factories: there is little or nothing in the way of evidence to mark their special features. We are told in the *T'ao Shuo*² that during the Southern Sung dynasty porcelain of the prohibited colour (*pi sê*)³ was made at Yü-yao Hsien which resembled the porcelain of Chün Chou. This last remark is of some value; for the Kuan wares, as we know them, resemble most closely the finer types of Chün yao which are discussed at some length in the next chapter.

Finally there are the wares made later at Ching-

¹ An example may be seen in the *Art of the Chinese Potter*, Plate XXXVII.

² Book V, quoting the *Liu-yen-chai-pi-chi*.

³ This term is usually taken to mean a secret or prohibited colour, and to denote a glaze effect, either the secret possession of a potter or one to be used only for Imperial ware.

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tê Chên in imitation of the Sung Kuan or Ta Kuan yao. As we have had occasion to notice elsewhere, the potters of the ceramic metropolis were constantly sent specimens of ancient ware to copy for the Emperor of the day. These imitations invariably have a white porcelain body, which is disguised at the exposed foot by being dressed with ferruginous clay.

CHAPTER VIII

CHÜN YAO

IN the previous chapter we have discussed the Kuan yao, which has distinct affinities to the finer types of Chün yao. In fact the Kuan yao may be regarded as the aristocrats of a large clan, in which the Chün yao represent the working members. Though to-day the market value placed upon the humbler representatives of the family are as high or higher than that put on any other ceramic group, the Chinese connoisseurs of bygone ages did not regard specimens from the kilns of Chün Chou as more than work-a-day companions.

In the *T'ao Shuo*, one page of Dr. Bushell's translation is all that is devoted to a description of the ware, and no major reference is made to examples of Chün yao in the recitation of typical specimens from the famous kilns. Such references as occur in the description of specimens are parenthetical in nature and of a disparaging character; thus the *Po-wu-yao-lan* says that "there are also incense urns and boxes of Chün Chou porcelain but they are made of coarse yellow clay and not good." In Hsiang's Album four examples are given, compared with twelve specimens of Ting yao, eleven of Lung-ch'üan yao, and ten of Kuan yao.

But posterity, both in China and in Europe and America, has set a different value upon the beautiful glazes executed in the Chün kilns, and a sum of four figures has to be given for a notable specimen of a Chün bulb-bowl. The factory was established at the beginning of the Sung

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dynasty at Chün Chou in Honan, not very far from K'ai-fêng Fu, where the earlier examples of Kuan yao were produced. There is no evidence that, when the House of Sung moved south of the Yang-tze to Hang Chou, the potters of Chün Chou went with them; and consequently we would not expect to see the differences of colour in the paste, which may characterise the Kuan yao of the Sung dynasty proper and that of the Southern Sung epoch.

Perhaps the practical Chin Tartars appreciated the Chün wares, and encouraged the continued production of bowls and flower-pots during the time they occupied Honan. When the Mongols overthrew the Southern Sung dynasty it is clear that the potters of Chün Chou were at work, for we have a considerable series of specimens from the factory which have been given the name Yüan tz'ü, to be described later in this chapter.

During the succeeding Ming dynasty the kilns were evidently still in operation, from the references made to their products in the K'ang Hsi Encyclopædia (the *Ku-chin-t'u-shu*) in the section dealing with the *t'ao kung* (pottery industry). In that dynasty the name of the town was changed to Yü Chou. At the present time pottery is being turned out at Yü Chou; but, if the potters have inherited the estate, they have not maintained the traditions or retained the skill of their predecessors.

The Sung examples of the ware fall into two classes, one is known among the Chinese as *tz'ü t'ai* (porcellanous paste) and the other as *sha t'ai* (sandy paste); among European and

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American collectors the two categories are generally called "hard Chün" and "soft Chün."

We must here digress for a moment to get our minds clear as to what is meant by the adjective "porcellanous"; and by the phrase "porcellanous stoneware," which has been used by collectors since its introduction by Mr. Hobson. To an English potter, porcelain implies a body-paste which contains certain ingredients and has been fired to a stage when vitrification has taken place to a considerable extent; as a result, the ware is translucent when held up to the light. Stoneware and earthenware, on the other hand, do not generally transmit light; though, where they have been turned very thin, they do so. Pottery pure and simple is not translucent. The Chinese, however, do not regard translucency as the test, and draw their line of demarcation between wares which emit a musical note on being struck, and those which do not.

"Porcellanous stoneware" implies a ware which answers to the Chinese definition but does not, as a rule, satisfy the English potters' requirements. Several of the Sung wares would be regarded as porcelain in the European sense of the word, since they are fairly translucent, e.g. the Ting yao; and the *ying ch'ing* ware mentioned in the preceding chapter is highly translucent. But in order to describe the finer and harder wares, which ring on being struck but which are opaque, the term porcellanous stoneware is a convenient one, though to Western minds it may imply a contradiction in terms. Or, to give another definition, porcellanous stone-

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ware is a non-translucent pottery in which a certain amount of the essential ingredients of porcelain are proved or presumed to be present.

The *tz'ü t'ai* is then what we call "porcellanous stoneware" of fine texture, and the *sha t'ai* a coarser body which tails off in the rougher specimens to a softish earthenware. As is only natural, the gradation is not very well defined, and examples may be found which can be classed at the bottom of the first group or at the top of the second.

The colour of the *tz'ü t'ai* body is a whitish-grey and not very dissimilar from certain other Honan bodies, when examined at a broken or ground-down surface. Mrs. Williams¹ quotes Chinese authorities, with whom she has conferred, as stating that the finer Chün wares were made from tribute clay sent from the neighbourhood of Ching-tê Chên in the province of Kiangsi; but the same authorities state that the tribute paid in kind thus was used at Imperial kilns and employed in the manufacture of pots and bowls for Imperial use. There is no literary evidence of the Chün Chou kilns being under the patronage of the throne and, if it had been so, Chinese commentators such as the writer of the *T'ao Shuo* would hardly have failed to describe at some length the type of article made for the palace.

The most gorgeous specimens of the porcellanous stoneware class are shallow bulb-bowls which stand on three small feet, and flower-pots

¹ Metropolitan Museum of New York: *Catalogue of an Exhibition of Early Chinese Pottery and Sculpture.*

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pierced with drainage holes in the bottom, which were intended to stand in saucers to prevent the water soiling the table on which they were placed. Collectors will meet more saucers than pots, since obviously the latter stood in more danger of breakage. The bases of these vessels have, as a rule, a coating of brown or brownish green transparent glaze, and invariably have a numeral incised in the paste. These numbers range from one to ten and denote the size. A pot and its saucer should bear the same number and match also in regard to glaze colour; but the number of perfect specimens, which are so complete, is very small. The bases of the bulb-bowls show, in addition, a circle of spur-marks on their circumferences marking the places on which the vessels rested in the kiln. The bases of the flower-pots do not show spur-marks, and apparently they were fired on a circular ring, the mark of which can be discerned.

The glaze colours employed in these Chün bulb-bowls and flower-pots need to be seen to be realised. They vary from a rich crimson, through shades of purple, to blues of different intensities and to lavender and grey tones. The insides of the bowls are generally either a fairly dark blue or a *clair-de-lune* colour. Though the *T'ao Shuo* speaks of specimens with a uniform colour as of first importance, and the four examples given in Hsiang's Album have a purple monochrome glaze, the bowls and flower-pots which have come into the Western market have variegated glaze colours. In fact, they represent the earliest examples of the

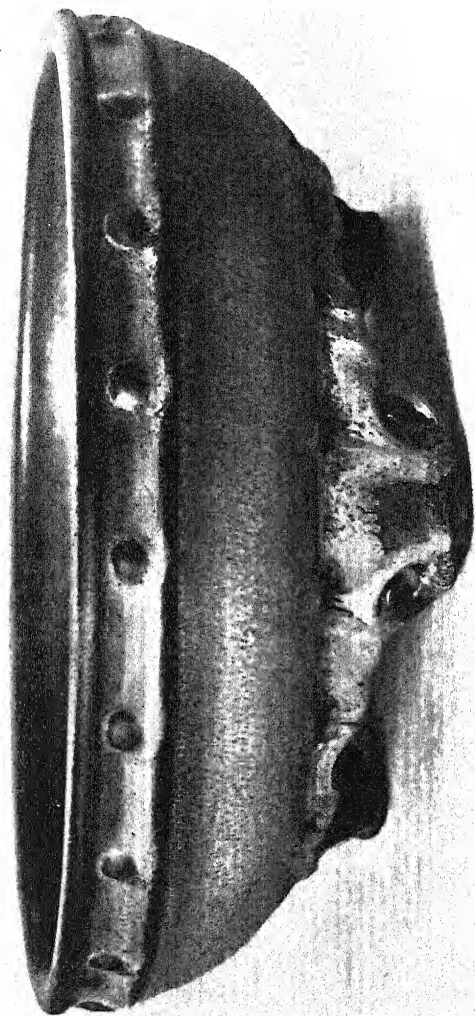
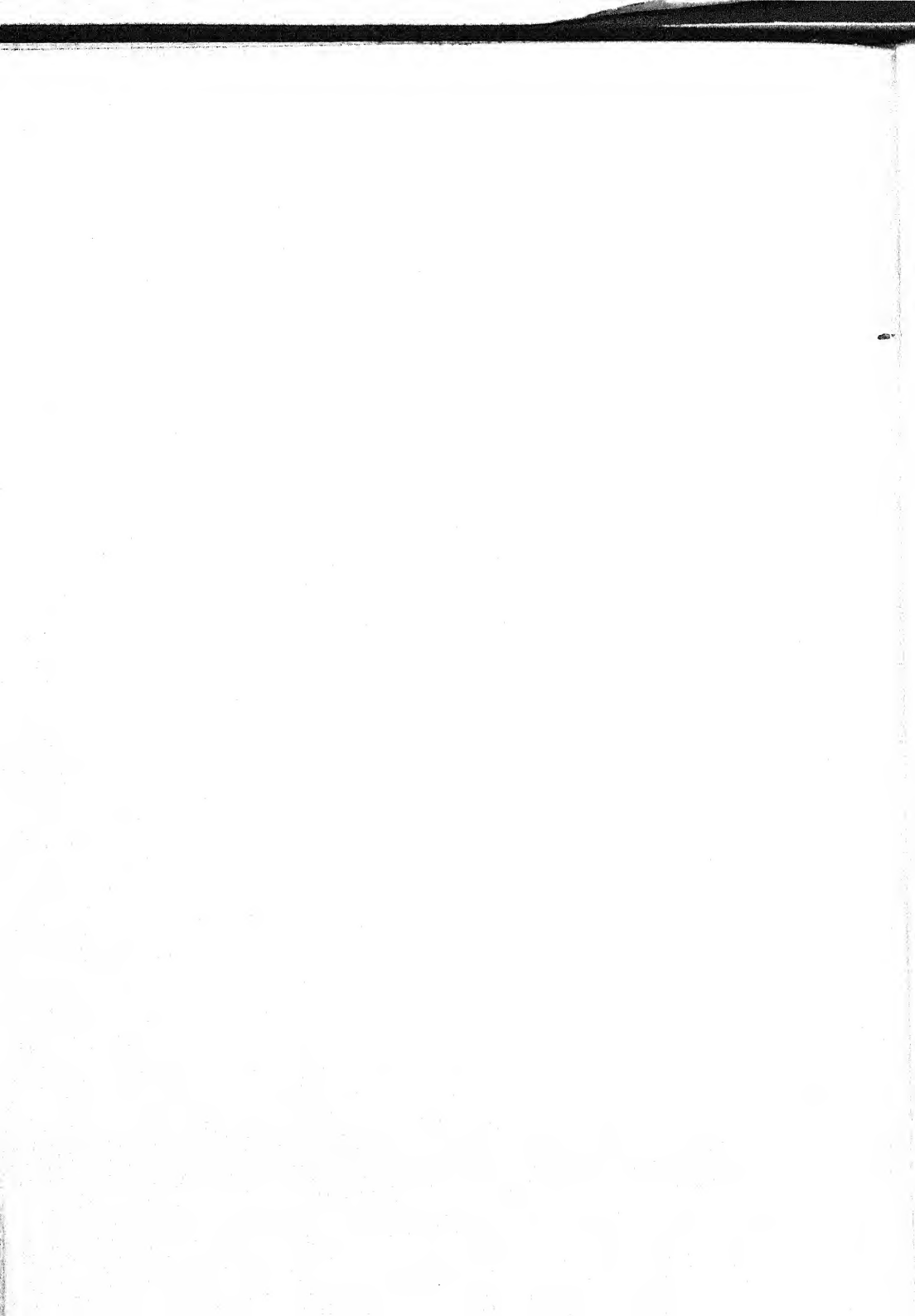


PLATE XIII. Chün yao : BULB-BOWL with purple opalescent glaze. 9 in. diam. Sung dynasty.
Eumorfopoulos Collection. (p. 105.)



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transmutation or flambé glazes, which were so much exploited in the eighteenth century. The use of copper provides the reds, purples and blues by reduction or oxidation, though most of the blue colour can be accounted for by opalescence only.

A specimen is shown on Plate XIII. The glaze on the outside is purplish blue flecked with flocculent grey with red passages. The inside has a mottled grey glaze. The base is covered with an olive brown glaze with the numeral *i* (one) incised.

The Chün glazes are thick and lustrous, often ending in thick rolls as they reach the end of their downward flow. They are not intentionally crackled, but they exhibit a more distinctive feature in what are called "earthworm marks." These are generally most apparent on the insides of the vessels and look like tiny cracks in the surface of the glaze, taking the shape of a shaky V or Y: sometimes these "earthworm marks" are more rambling in their course, when the origin of the name is apparent. Considerable importance is attached to the presence or absence of these markings by the Chinese, though their occurrence is not mentioned in the short description of the ware given in the *T'ao Shuo*. Their presence, like the "tear marks" in the Ting yao, is regarded as a sign of genuineness.

Another characteristic of the Chün glazes is their pitting, which is due to bubbles of air being driven to the surface during the firing. When these burst, they leave tiny scars or pin holes in the glaze.

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Apart from the shaping of the feet, which are usually ornamented with simple scrolls, and the addition of a double row of bosses on the bulb-bowls, the Chün wares, as we know them, have no other decoration. They depend for their beauty on the colour effects of the glaze. It is true that the examples figured in Hsiang's Album are ornamented with incised decoration, but no extant example of this embellishment on a Sung specimen is known to exist. Nor have we seen such an elaborate production as the oil vessel in the shape of a coiling dragon, which is one of the specimens depicted in the same work. As stated in the beginning of this chapter, all the wares produced appear to have been of a strictly utilitarian nature and were not designed to add to the mental satisfaction of the scholar in his library or to his æsthetic indulgence.

A small example of hard Chün in the form of a vase with a typical red splash in the blue glaze is shown on the frontispiece of this book, and a bowl, which has collapsed into its saggar during firing and has adhered to it, is seen on Plate XIV.

The second category of Chün yao, which is termed "soft" Chün by Europeans and *sha t'ai* by the Chinese, differs from the type we have just described in two respects: the body is yellower in colour and coarser in grain, and the range of shapes is wider. As already mentioned, the line of demarcation between the two categories is ill defined, and several specimens which I group under this head may well be classified as "hard" Chün, owing to the porcelainous nature of their paste.

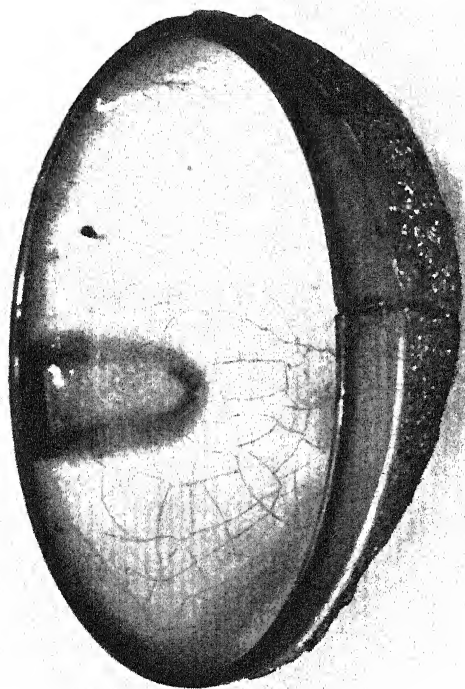
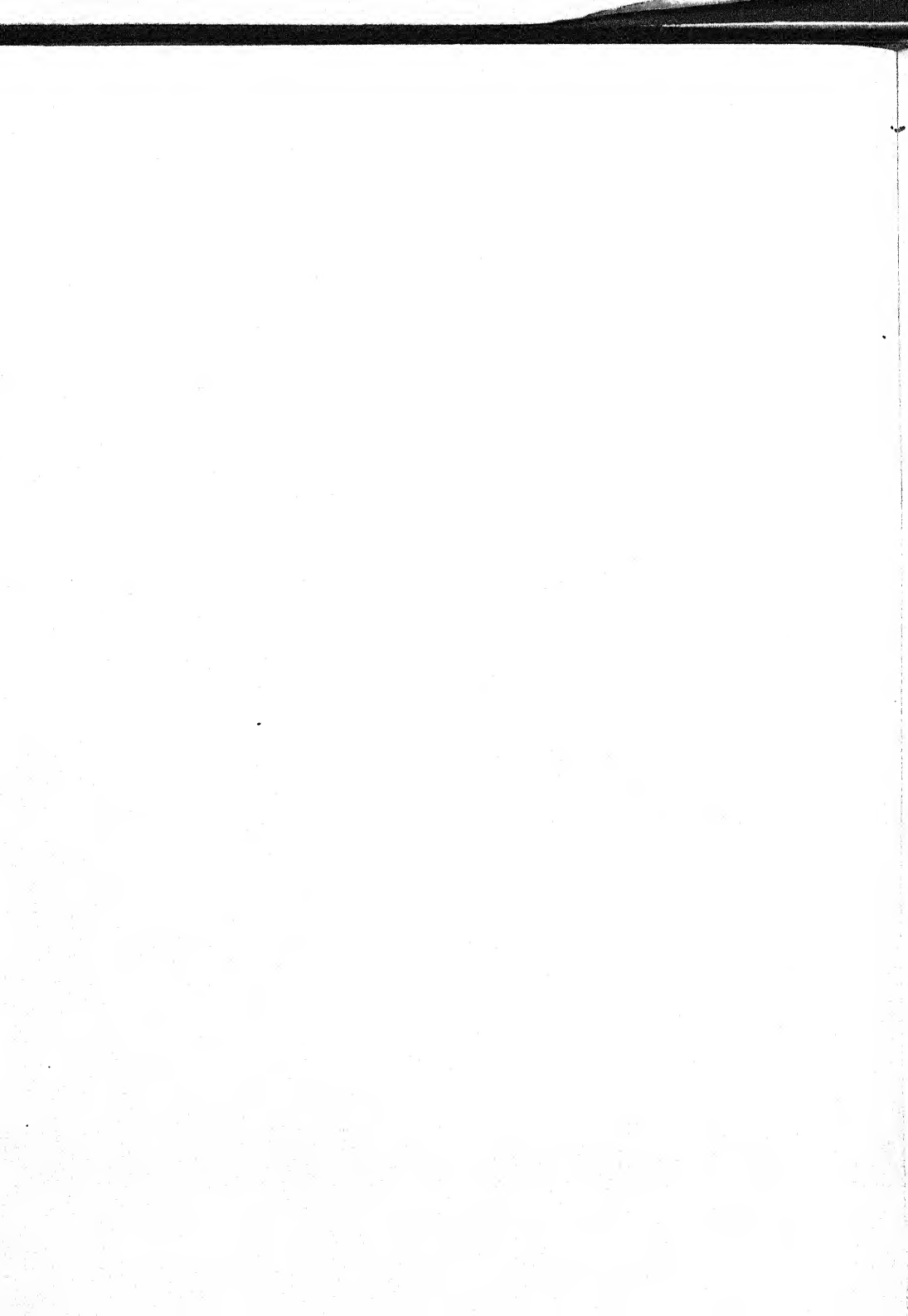


PLATE XIV. Chün yao : BOWL with part of saggar attached, porcellaneous stoneware, pale blue glaze with reddish purple splash. $7\frac{1}{2}$ in. diam. Sung dynasty. *Harris Collection.* (p. 106.)



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Specimens of "soft" Chün are to be found with numerals incised in the base in a fashion similar to that described above in connexion with the "hard" Chün bulb-bowls.

The general characteristics of the glaze are similar to those displayed in the first category; it is thick and opalescent, and the prevailing colour is blue or lavender-grey. While specimens with a homogeneous colour are in some ways the most pleasing, those with streaks of red or purple are considered specially desirable. The glaze generally shows considerable crazing.

Before dealing with the various imitations of Chün yao of the Sung period, some description must be given of the class of ware which goes by the name of Yüan tz'ü.

I am not aware how the term Yüan tz'ü originated nor does its genesis matter to us; its meaning is evident, and signifies the ware produced at Chün Chou during the Yüan or Mongol dynasty. The phrase would naturally embrace the ware made at any factory during those eighty-seven years, but, in point of fact, is only used in connexion with the Yüan products of the Chün kilns.

There is no doubt that most, if not all, of the factories which were operating in the Sung dynasty turned out goods for their Mongol masters. As has been suggested in other chapters, the wares may have been of a rougher and less finished character, likely to furnish a good trading article; but it is not probable that definitely new types were created by the native potters during the Yüan dynasty, still less that new centres

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of ceramic production were founded. The imposition of a foreign rule for a period of less than a hundred years is unlikely to have done anything for creative art. On the other hand, the exactions of the Mongols probably hastened output to the detriment of quality. For these reasons separate consideration will not be given to the Yüan wares in this book, but they will be dealt with, so far as is necessary, under each centre of production. He would be a bold man who, at this distance of time, could say with assurance, "This is a Yüan specimen and that is a Sung one." He might fairly say "This specimen from its general technique seems to lack the finish and quality of Sung examples and inclines me to regard it as a Yüan piece," but that is the most a self-respecting collector can say. Most of us would prefer to say "Sung or Yüan," in the hope that we were within that range of approximately four hundred years.

We have already noted that posterity has placed a high value upon the artistic effect of the Chün glazes; their beauty was evidently appreciated at the end of the Ming dynasty, for we learn from the *T'ao Shuo*¹ that "the new pieces made in the present day (*i.e.* Ming days) all have the body of Yi-hsing clay and consequently, although their glaze has some resemblance to the old, and the pieces are of good form, they do not wear well." Later in his commentary the author of the *T'ao Shuo* remarks: "We find again that during the Ming

¹ Books II and III.

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dynasty there lived in the province of Kiangnan,¹ at Yi-hsing Hsien, a man named Ou, who made the porcelain called after him 'Ou ware.' He imitated the crackles of the ancient Ko porcelain and the colours of the Imperial (Kuan) and Chün Chou productions of the Sung dynasty. The colours employed by him were very numerous."

The Yi-hsing clay produces a hardish red stoneware, which is familiar to collectors in the unglazed *buccaro* ware teapots and other vessels. When, therefore, collectors come across specimens with a glaze resembling those of Chün Chou but with a red stoneware body, they are probably confronted with an Yi-hsing product made by Ou or more probably by one of his successors. The examples usually met with are of a dark blue or purplish hue flecked with red streaks, and bear a close resemblance to certain types of Chün yao. But comfort may be sought in the remark quoted above, "they do not wear well." The glaze seems to be of a softish nature and scratches and rubbings are often apparent, which, with the characteristic body colour, help detection. Mr. Hobson² assists us further by suggesting that a concave base in place of a hollowed-out foot and foot-rim, together with a stoppage of the glaze just short of the base in an even regular line instead of a wavy line, are characteristics of Yi-hsing potting.

But we are not at the end of imitation Chüns.

¹ In the Manchu dynasty the province of Kiangnan was divided up into Anhui and Kiangsu. Yi-hsing is near Lake T'ai-hu in the province of Kiangsu.

² *Chinese Pottery and Porcelain*, vol. i, p. 183.

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The Kuangtung factories were early imitators of the Chün glazes; in particular the factory at Fat-shan, which is close to Canton, produced wares which bear a family likeness. The deception is heightened by the bases of the specimens being often incised with numerals in imitation of the Chün Chou practice. But to my mind these copies are easier to detect than the Yi-hsing specimens: the Kuangtung body is distinctive with its dark grey colour, and the glaze has neither the fatness nor the kind of blue opalescence exhibited by the Chün yao. Some of the mottled glazed examples of Kuangtung ware, which have arrived in this country direct from China, have been styled Sung specimens. There is every reason to believe that the Canton factories were established at a very early date; in fact, they were operative in the T'ang dynasty; but these reputed Sung Kuangtung wares are not in the least convincing to the Western eye, and they bear the closest resemblance to the seventeenth and eighteenth century products, of which a considerable number can be found without difficulty. Their shape frequently takes the form of baluster vases, which are certainly not typical of the Sung period. I may be thought to be giving too lengthy a description of these reputed Sung specimens from the South; but as the early Kuangtung wares do not form a sufficiently important group to merit separate reference, the present chapter seems a fitting place to dispose of them. One cannot meet repeatedly specimens of this ware attributed by the Chinese to Sung times, without taking

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the statements into consideration. No doubt the Chinese dealer puts a Sung label on his consignments to enhance their appreciation on this side in the eyes of the unwary or unscrupulous; but the statements are persisted in, despite scepticism from those whose opinions carry weight in China. Like the butterman of immortal memory,¹ the Chinese presumably know something about their own goods, and native opinion cannot be dismissed lightly. We may yet be convinced of the Sung origin of some of the Kuang yao, which at present is put to the credit of seventeenth and eighteenth century potters.

Lastly we have to deal with the imitations of Chün yao made at Ching-tê Chên in the eighteenth century during the reign of Yung Chêng (1723-1735). The Imperial factories at Ching-tê Chên no doubt made reproductions of the early wares from original specimens sent from the palace by various Emperors, but it was apparently in the reign of Yung Chêng that the best efforts were made in this direction. The lists of porcelains made at the Imperial factories about 1730 furnish full particulars of the different glazes made in imitation of the Chün effects, and the results are strikingly beautiful. There was no fraudulent intention in these copies; for, though the white porcelain which composed the body was dressed with

¹ Many of my readers will remember the play, *Our Boys*, sufficiently to recall the plaintive remark of the butterman, "Do let me know something of butter. I tell you it's *Dossit*."

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ferruginous clay to give the "iron foot," the dressing was added to put the piece in keeping with its prototype. The fact that specimens often bear the *nien hao* of Yung Chêng in seal characters incised on their bases proves the *bona fides* of the potter. But while the original maker was not intending to deceive, subsequent owners sometimes have had that intention, for some of these Yung Chêng copies, on which the tell-tale *nien hao* has been inscribed, have had their seal ground off and the white porcelain disguised by brown varnish.

Judged by glaze effect alone, these replicas are extremely hard to detect; there is a quality about the glaze of the best examples which is baffling: in fact, as articles of beauty they are highly desirable and approach more nearly to the perfection of the Sung glazes than do, perhaps, any other later imitations of the early wares. No great difficulty exists, however, in determining their provenance, for the body is never disguised to a degree which prevents detection.

More serious trouble is caused by imitations made on a pottery or earthenware body both in China and Japan; some of these bear such a close resemblance to the Chün wares of the *sha t'ai* type that collectors need to be cautious. The finish of the foot is often suspicious, and there is an unconvincing atmosphere about them which will help the collector, after experience of the real article and of the spurious.

CHAPTER IX

TING YAO AND RELATED WARES

SPECIMENS of Ting yao are justly regarded by Chinese and European connoisseurs alike as typical examples of the best Sung art. In this case, unlike that of the Chün yao, contemporary opinion was as emphatic on the subject as that of posterity.

The ware derives its name from the town of Ting Chou in the province of Chihli, and seems to have been made there as early as the beginning of the Sung dynasty. It is probable that ware of a less refined nature was made earlier still; for Hirth¹ quotes the T'ang pharmacopœia, compiled about A.D. 650, as proving the early use of kaolin for ceramic purposes: the T'ang compilation recommends a powder prepared from "White ware of Ting Chou" as a remedy for certain ailments: the same T'ang work in referring to the porcelain earth or kaolin (*pai o*) says that "It is now used for painter's work and rarely enters into medical prescriptions; during recent generations it has been prepared from white ware." Moreover, Mrs. Williams² tells us that locally the Ting ware is reputed to have been famous under the Sung dynasty and *before*, and that tradition places the factory site at *Pai-t'u Ts'un* or the "Village of White Clay" somewhere to the west of the town. It is to be hoped that the precise spot may be located and that scientific excavation will show us precisely what was the

¹ *Ancient Chinese Porcelain*. By F. Hirth, quoting the T'ang-pên-ts'ao.

² Metropolitan Museum of New York, *Catalogue of an Exhibition of Early Chinese Pottery and Sculpture*, p. 86.

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were made in the early days, before the Ting Chou potters moved South at the time of the exodus of the Sung court in 1127.

Literary records pay high encomiums to this Northern Ting yao, which is said to have reached its highest degree of excellence in the Chêng Ho and Hsüan Ho periods, *i.e.* 1111-1125. After the flight from Honan and Chihli in 1127, the Ting Chou potters set up kilns south of the Yang-tze, but where exactly was the main centre of production is not clear. Mrs. Williams says the place was Ch'ang-nan, or the ceramic metropolis of Ching-tê Chên. As we have already noted,¹ the name Ch'ang-nan Chên was changed to Ching-tê Chên about twenty years before the Southern Sung dynasty was formed. Mr. Hobson² is less definite and indicates that the potters re-established themselves in the neighbourhood of Ching-tê Chên. Mr. Hippisley³ states that the new centre was at Hang Chou, the Southern Sung capital. Probably the Imperial factory of Ching-tê Chên, which during the Sung dynasty was already becoming important, was the place to which most of the Ting Chou potters gravitated; but it is also probable that, when the school of potters broke up in Chihli, some drifted to other pottery centres to help in the production of the *nan ting*, as the Southern Ting yao is called in contradistinction to the *pei ting* or Northern Ting yao.

Chu Yen, the author of the *T'ao Shuo*, tells us

¹ See p. 39.

² *Chinese Pottery and Porcelain*, vol. i, p. 89.

³ *Sketch of the History of Ceramic Art in China*, p. 16.

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for our comfort that "Lovers of ancient art work who can distinguish Southern from Northern Ting and are not taken in by these later imitations, have no reason for shame, and may be reckoned connoisseurs." If this was the opinion of a distinguished Chinese expert in the eighteenth century, the "foreign devil" of the twentieth may rest content in the possession of one or two fine examples of Ting yao, whether they are specimens of the potter's craft in the Sung dynasty proper or in the Southern Sung epoch. At all events we will not attempt the impossible by trying to define differences between the two, but will content ourselves by setting out the chief features exhibited by Ting yao as a whole.

The body is white with a tendency towards a yellow tone in the less fine examples; the paste has a fine grain and a quality not dissimilar from that of the later porcelains. Specimens of the ware ring on being struck, and many examples are potted thin enough to transmit light. Of all the Sung wares (except those discussed in Chapter VI), the Ting yao most nearly satisfies the European definition of porcelain as well as the Chinese conception. The light transmitted is always of a yellow colour. The body where it has been exposed to the direct heat of the kiln does not exhibit any brownness, and there is no "brown mouth and iron foot." There is another characteristic feature about the potting. The bowls, plates and saucers, which form a substantial section of the specimens we see, were baked upside down on their mouth-rims and not on their foot-rims. In consequence, the former

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have no glaze, while the base and foot-rim are usually covered with it. To hide the unglazed mouth-rim, pieces were often bound in copper.

The unglazed mouth-rims, whether bound with copper or not, are considered to be evidence of a Sung origin, for it has been stated that the Ching-tê Chên potters in the Ming dynasty did not imitate this feature. This is not improbable, for the technical skill of the later potters was greater, even if their artistry was of a lower order; and they certainly had sufficient pride in their craftsmanship to avoid slavish copying of what is a potting weakness. While, however, all salmon are fish, all fish are not salmon; so, although a specimen with a glazed mouth-rim is unlikely to date from Sung times, the reverse is not necessarily the case. As we shall see presently, the modern imitations of Ting yao, which are intentional copies of Sung specimens, are always bound with copper.

The glaze is lustrous and resembles ivory in texture and colour; on the outside of the vessels are usually found "tear-drops." These are small collections of glaze, which are of a straw-yellow colour, due to incomplete mastery of the technique of glaze application. But while these marks are technical imperfections, they have come to be regarded as indispensable signs of genuine Ting yao of the Sung dynasty. "Those which have tear-drops outside are genuine," and "when the glaze has drops upon it like tears it is highly valued" are comments quoted in the *T'ao Shuo* as made by ancient connoisseurs, and

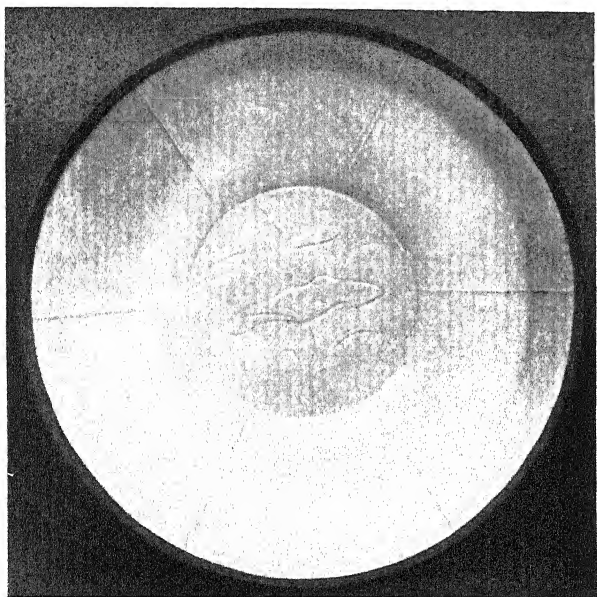
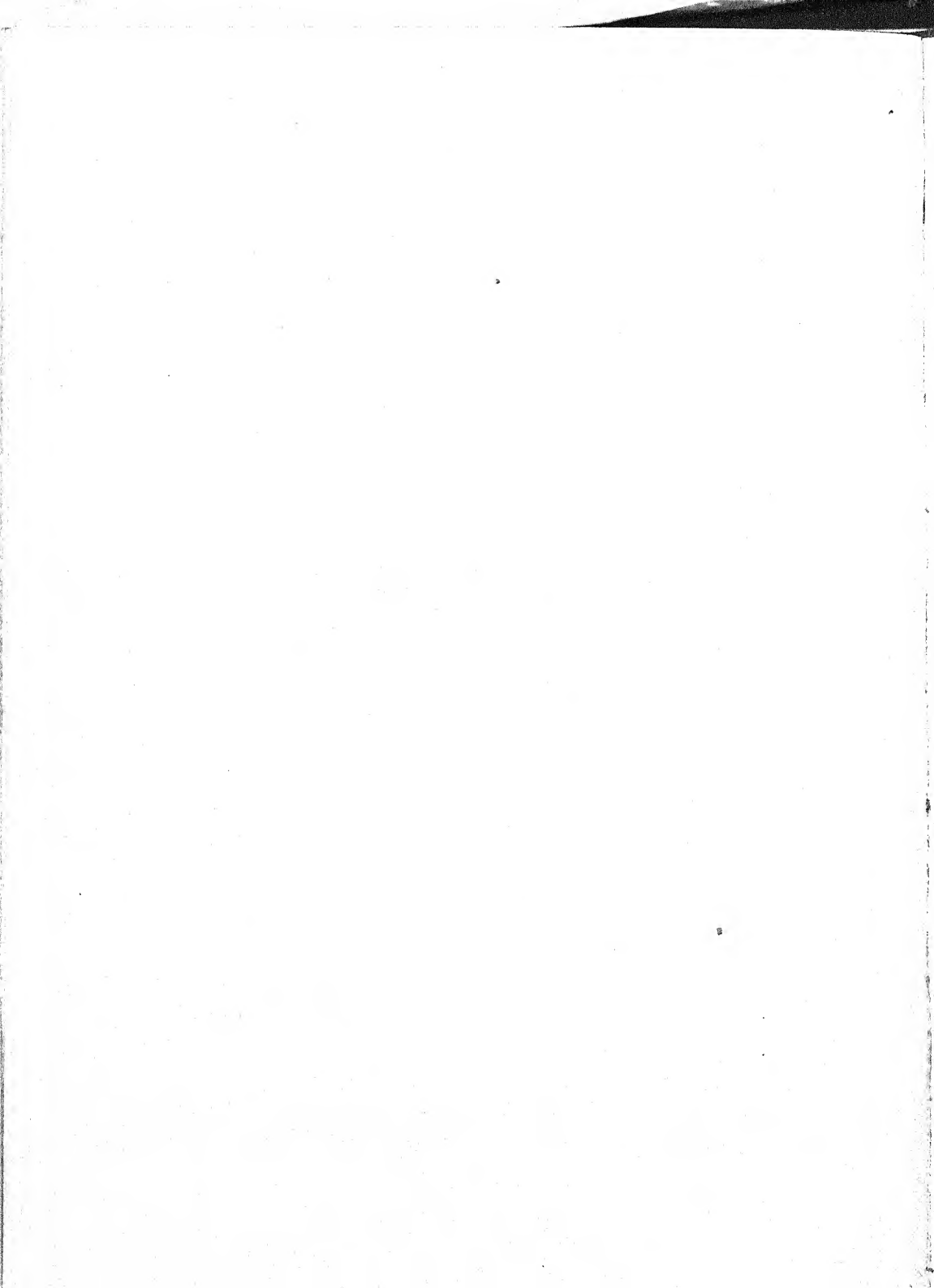


PLATE XV. Fig. 1.—Ting yao : SHALLOW BOWL with mouth-rim bound in copper, milk-white glaze and incised floral design. $7\frac{1}{2}$ in. diam. Sung dynasty. *Baird Collection.* (p. 121.)



Fig. 2.—Similar BOWL. 9 in. diam. *Oppenheim Collection.* (p. 121.)



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the presence or absence of these characteristics is the first point which a collector looks for in a specimen of Ting. The modern copies which I have seen have the tear-marks all right, but they are in the wrong place. They are on the inside of the bowls instead of the outside. This is a convenient piece of thoughtlessness on the part of the forger which he will no doubt rectify for our discomfiture. But unless he has artistic powers of a very high order, he will be hard put to it to achieve the perfection of drawing which so distinguished the Ting potter.

Ting yao is grouped under three categories which are known as *pai ting*, *fên ting*, and *t'u ting*. *Pai ting*, or white Ting, includes the finer quality pieces and, as the name implies, a brilliant whiteness is its feature. *Fên ting*, or rice flour Ting, is difficult to distinguish from *pai ting*: a slightly greyer tone may characterise the white glaze of the *fên ting* class, and the colours of table salt and of ground rice describe perhaps the degree of difference. Less similarity is shown by the *t'u ting*, or earthy Ting: the body is coarser and opaque, and the glaze is of a creamy yellow colour and crackled. In all three varieties the glaze is thinly applied and there is no sign of the thick glazes found on the Kuan, Chün, Lung-ch'üan and Chien wares.

We have given the impression that all the Ting yao was white or nearly so; but, though this is true of any specimens the ordinary collector is likely to meet, we read of purple (*tzü*) Ting, and black Ting.¹ The *Ko-ku-yao-lun* says: "There

¹ See p. 163 for a reference also to red Ting.

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is purple¹ Ting Chou ware in which the colour is purple, and also black Ting Chou ware with a glaze as black as lacquer." In Hsiang's Album twelve examples of Ting yao are figured, six are white, five are purple, and one is white shading somewhat abruptly into black. Hsiang Yüan-pien enters into rhapsodies about this last specimen, which is a wine vase with a neck and head in the shape of that of a duck. The black glaze extends over the head and neck and merges rather suddenly into white, of which the body of the duck entirely consists. He says that in the course of his life he had seen hundreds of white Ting specimens, some tens of purple, but only this one black example, which belonged to a relative of his wife. As none of us is likely to see one in the possession of even a distant relative, we need not discuss black Ting further; no authenticated specimen is known to exist in this country or America.² We have, moreover, to confess to no first-hand knowledge of purple Ting. It is curious that no example of reputed purple Ting has been exported to Western countries in view of the apparent familiarity a connoisseur like Hsiang Yüan-pien had with the ware.

The decoration employed took various forms. Sometimes designs were carved with a hard point in the paste, and these were not much diminished

¹ That purple is really meant and not brown (*tzü* carries both meanings) seems indicated by the qualifying description in Hsiang's Album. In describing one of his specimens of purple Ting he likens the colour to that of ripe grapes.

² A possible example is illustrated on Plate LXII of the *Art of the Chinese Potter*.

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in sharpness of outline by the thin layer of glaze subsequently imposed. This type is universally regarded as the best; the designs are usually floral, but animals such as fishes, ducks and phoenixes are also to be found. These etched embellishments are executed with a characteristic boldness, and there is no finicky work about them; they afford rather a marked contrast in this respect to the moulded variety, which form the next category. This freedom of drawing must be emphasised because it is one of the main points which distinguish the Sung specimens from those of later date. Often the whole bottom of the plate or bowl is occupied by the design, which is executed by relatively few strokes of the etching tool; the lines are carried through with a firm and confident sweep, and there is no touching up or rectification of faulty strokes in the best specimens. Nor is there stiffness in the drawing, though the design may be formal.

Moulded or stamped ornamentation is frequently found and is also beautifully executed; but the decoration is more crowded. This is perhaps natural, for the designs were produced in the first place on a mould, the metal of which lent itself to more narrow adjustment than the plastic clay. The drawings, which are usually of flowers and leaves, are often surrounded by a key-fret pattern or by scroll work. So fine is the workmanship that a good specimen will bear examination under a magnifying glass.

But many Ting examples owe their beauty to shape and glaze alone; some of the small articles made for the scholar's table are exquisite in their

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daintiness, while the grace of the larger vases is equally distinguished.

Chinese writers also speak of Ting yao which is ornamented with *hsiu hua*. This expression means "ornament painted in many colours." As the expression cannot refer to monochrome decoration it opens up a very interesting question. We do not associate painted designs with Ting yao; but we know that the potters of Tz'ü Chou used black or brown decoration upon a white glaze with freedom. We also know that, in a ware closely allied to the Tz'ü Chou product, the earliest examples of enamelled decoration have been found.¹ As Tz'ü Chou and Ting Chou are not very far from each other, and as the factories were in operation at the same time, it is quite conceivable that they employed a similar technique. In certain other respects the glaze of the Sung products of Tz'ü Chou bears some resemblance to a Ting glaze, and additional evidence may soon be forthcoming which will take certain painted specimens out of a Tz'ü Chou classification and group them in the Ting category.

The *Ko-ku-yao-lun* and the *Po-wu-yao-lan*, which refer to the *hsiu hua* variety of Ting yao, may have included Tz'ü Chou workmanship by mistake. As, however, the former of these works was published in 1387 and the latter in the early part of the seventeenth century, there seems no reason why a mistake of this magnitude should have been made; though the repetition of the

¹ The bowl illustrated on Plate XCII of *The Art of the Chinese Potter* is an example.

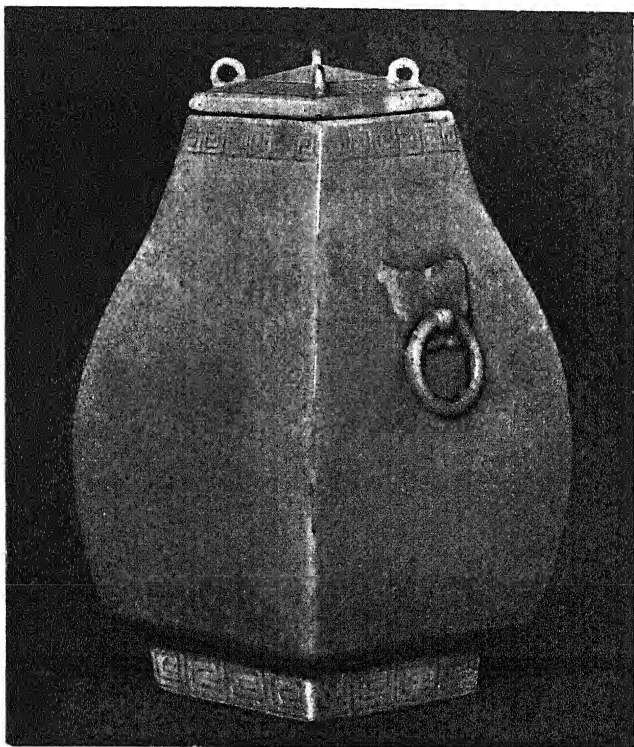


PLATE XVI. Ting yao (t'u ting): SQUARE VASE with pear-shaped outline and tiger mask and rings. Creamy glaze, minutely crazed. 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. high. Sung dynasty. *Eumorfopoulos Collection.* (p. 121.)

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reference cannot be given much weight, as Chinese writers of art books are notorious for the way in which they borrow wholesale from their fore-runners.

On Plate XV will be seen examples of the *pai ting yao*, while on Plate XVI an example is shown of *t'u ting*.

So far, we have discussed Ting yao of the Sung and Southern Sung dynasties made at Ting Chou and Ching-tê Chên respectively; we have now to consider later products and those turned out by less important factories in Sung and post-Sung times.

In the Yüan dynasty a goldsmith, by name P'êng Chün-pao, produced at his kilns at Ho Chou in Shansi a white ware which closely resembled Ting yao; it was called P'êng yao after its maker and was known also as *hsin*, or new, Ting yao. The fourteenth-century work quoted above, which was written more or less contemporaneously, describes it as having a fine paste, but the glaze was less rich and the ware was fragile.

In the same dynasty the Ching-tê Chên factories were plying their trade, producing no doubt quantity rather than quality; but, as the ware was not so suitable for export or trade generally, probably the output was more spasmodic than in the case of the factories manufacturing such marketable goods as the celadons.

Later on, when China was restored to its native rulers, the Ming Emperors put Ching-tê Chên into a pre-eminent position among the ceramic centres; and although new types, such as the

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blue and white and polychrome wares, were introduced, the old traditions were maintained as well. Ting ware continued to be produced of fine quality. In particular there was a famous potter, by name Chou Tan-ch'uan, who is reputed to have made reproductions of the Ting yao which defied detection. Mr. Hobson quotes Stanilas Julien's translation of a story told of Chou Tan-ch'uan, which is so delightful that it must be repeated. "One day Chou embarked on a merchant boat from Chin-ch'ang and landed on the right bank of the Kiang. Passing P'i-ling, he called on T'ang Hao-ch'êng,¹ the Director of the Court of Sacrificial Worship, and asked permission to examine at leisure an ancient tripod of Ting porcelain which was one of the gems of his collection. With his hand he took the exact measurements of the vessel; then he made an impression of the patterns on the tripod with some paper which he had hidden in his sleeve, and returned to Ching-tê Chên. Six months after he returned and paid a second visit to T'ang. Taking from his sleeve a tripod, he said to him, 'Your Excellency owns a tripod censor of white Ting porcelain. Here is its fellow, which belongs to me.' T'ang was astounded. He compared it with the old tripod, which he kept most carefully preserved, and could find no difference. He tried its feet against those of his own vessel and exchanged the covers, and found that it matched with perfect precision. T'ang thereupon asked whence came this wonderful specimen. 'Some time ago,' replied Chou, 'I asked

¹ Mayer's *Chinese Government*, No. 232.

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your leave to examine your tripod at leisure. I then took all its measurements with my hand. I assure you that this is a copy of yours and that I would not deceive you in the matter.' The Director of the Court of Sacrificial Worship, realising the truth of this statement, bought for forty ounces of silver the tripod, which filled him with admiration, and placed it in his collection beside the original as though it were its double."

The sequel to this story is no less amusing and runs as follows: "In the Wan Li period, Tu Chiu, of Huai-an, came to Fu-liang. Smitten with a deep longing for T'ang's old censer, he could think of nothing else, and even saw it in his dreams. One day he went with T'ang Chün-yü, the grandson of the Director of the Court of Sacrificial Worship, and after much importunity he succeeded in getting from him, for a thousand ounces of silver, the imitation made by Chou, and returned home completely happy." The joy of T'ang must have been equally great at the result of his forethought in purchasing Chou's copy, whereby he made a profit of 2,400 per cent. and still retained his beloved censer.

Although collectors of to-day will not meet such precious Ming copies as this one must have been, they will see from time to time most desirable examples. They will also find a number of specimens with a Ting-like glaze which it is difficult to assign with any assurance: many from their general appearance seem to be of Sung date, others show obvious Ming characteristics; but in between are debateable examples which are variously attributed by different

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schools of thought. The author of the *T'ao Shuo* in his description of specimens refers to a number made in the Sung Dynasty. Among others he mentions round dishes moulded like a plaited basket of willow, and the little bowl shown on Plate XVII, fig. 1, would appear to be similar in character.

The white ware of Ching-tê Chên turned out in the Manchu dynasty has, as a rule, a very different appearance from the Ming copies of Ting yao; the porcelain is finer in quality but the glaze is less rich and has a more dead white appearance; moreover, where designs are added, the drawing is generally stiffer.

We must now pass to the minor factories which produced ware of the Ting type, though in some cases the resemblance is not very close. One nearly related member of the family has already been mentioned, viz., the ware known as *hsin ting* or the New Ting made by P'êng Chün-pao and his school at Ho Chou in Shansi. There were apparently three other factories in Shansi which made white wares, but unfortunately we do not know much about them or their products. They were situated at P'ing-yang Fu, Yu-tzü Hsien, and P'ing-ting Chou. The first two began operations in the T'ang dynasty and the last named in Sung times. From their geographical position it is unlikely that any of the Ting Chou potters migrated to these centres to avoid the Chin Tartars; the potters would have moved further out of reach, south of the Yang-tze; or, at all events, would have travelled south of the Yellow River and westward



PLATE XVII. FIG. 1.—Ting yao : GLOBULAR BOWL with bamboo ribbing and creamy glaze. $2\frac{1}{2}$ in. diam. Sung dynasty. *Raphael Collection*. (p. 124.)

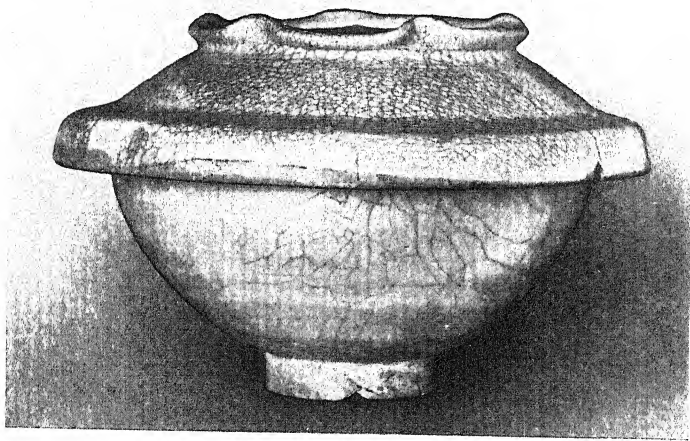
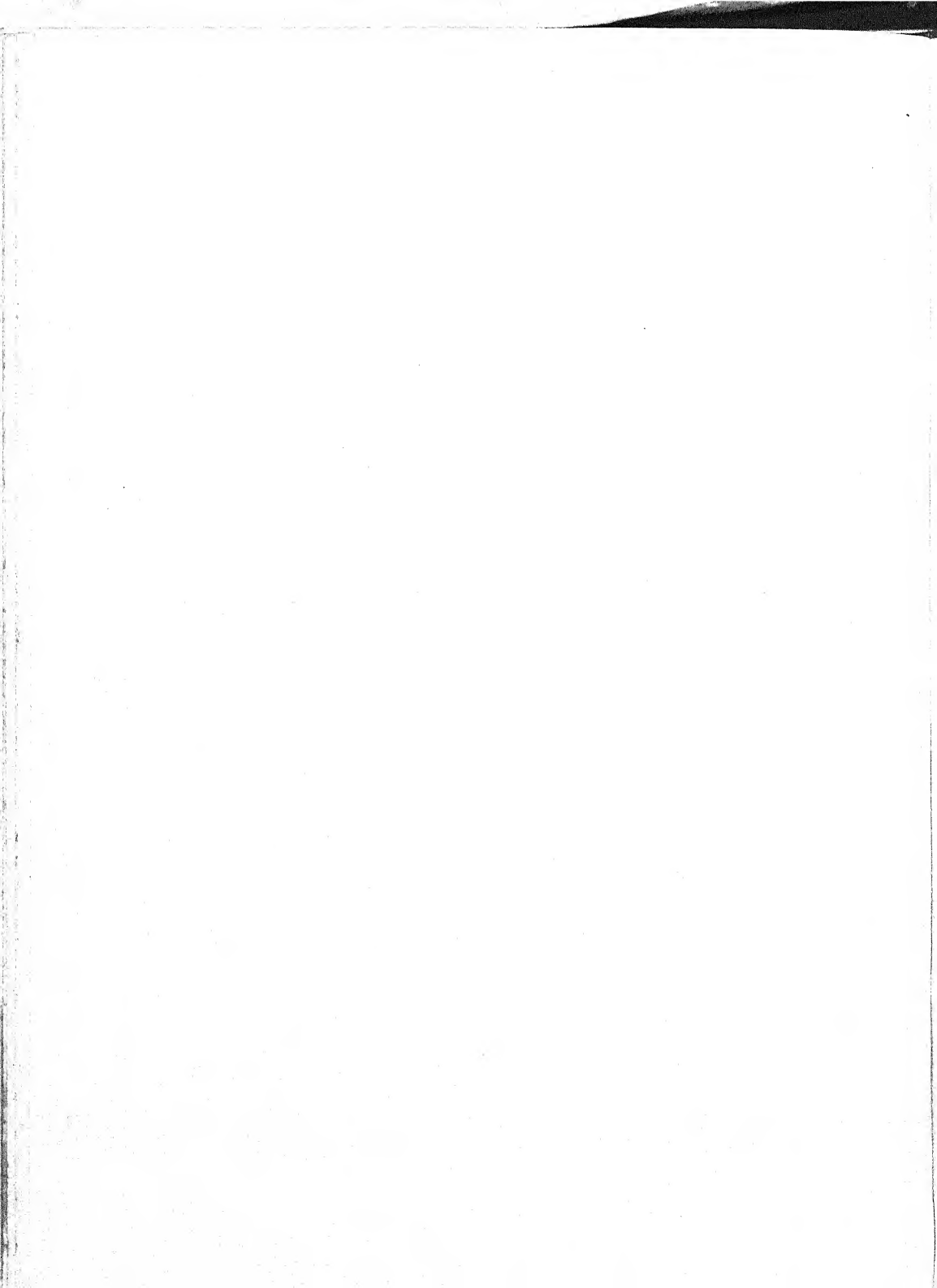


Fig. 2.—Ting type : BOWL with crinkled lid, white slip and transparent crackled glaze (Külusien type). $5\frac{1}{8}$ in. diam. Sung dynasty. *Baird Collection*. (p. 153.)



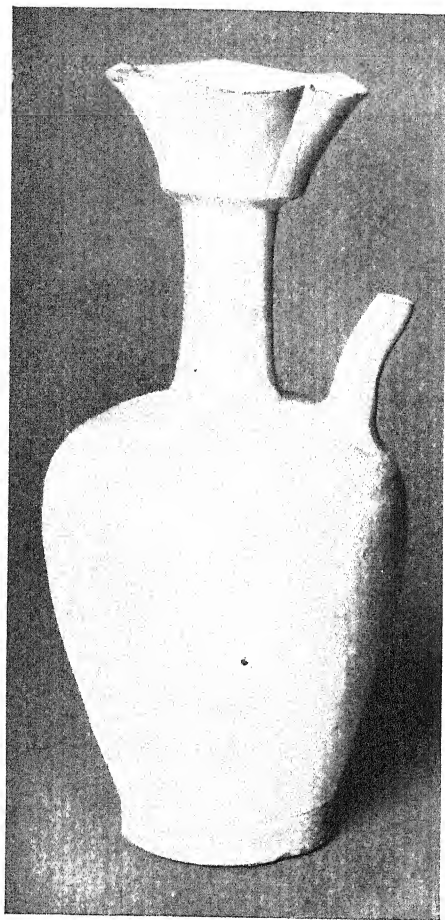


PLATE XVIII. Ting type: WINE EWER
with five-lobed mouth, creamy white
glaze. 11 in. high. Sung dynasty. *Wink-*
worth Collection. (p. 125.)

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in company with the general exodus in that direction.

If this were so, we must look to these Shansi factories to have produced ware exhibiting features of their own and probably of a rough type: literary records, such as they are, bear out this surmise, since we are told that their products were of a coarse build and of inferior quality. Specimens are met with which are of a utilitarian kind, bowls, wine jars, etc., and which are covered with a creamy-white glaze of poorish quality. Some of these are reported to have been excavated from Sung tombs in Shansi, which may point to their manufacture in the same province; but "reported" sources are most unsatisfactory aids to attribution: one never knows how far the information has been adjusted before it is received. It is curious that the Shansi railway cuttings have not produced better evidence. A possible example of this northern type of white glazed ware is seen on Plate XVIII.

A much more important group of factories are those which were placed in the old province of Kiangnan, and the supposed products of which are tentatively grouped under the title Kiangnan Ting. The collector will be puzzled by the use of the name Kiangnan, which he will not find on any recent map of China. It was a province of China in the Ming dynasty and earlier; in the Manchu dynasty it was divided into the present provinces of Kiangsu and Anhui. In Sung times there were factories at Su Chou and Sze Chou in Anhui, and in the same province a factory was operating in Yüan and Ming days at Hsüan Chou. In

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Kiangsu there was another " Village of White Clay " situated at Hsiao Hsien. It is to these factories that we must look for the wares classed as Kiangnan Ting. I suggest that when the Ting Chou potters scattered, some of them may have found their way to one or more of these centres, though the bulk of them made for Ching-tê Chên. This would account, perhaps, for the excellent quality of many of the " Kiangnan Ting " specimens, the general characteristics of which must now be described.

There are two types which are specially associated with Kiangnan. The first consists of large vessels, generally wide-mouthed vases or bowls which have a creamy-white glaze of the " orange-peel " variety, well known to collectors of the later wares. The other type is generally classed as a product of Ming potters, but there are no doubt specimens of Sung or Yüan origin as well; the glaze is like ivory in texture but is very finely crackled, and there are often large patches of light brown spreading over the surface, and, less frequently, purple staining. A pig-skin effect ¹ is produced which can be realised from the example figured on Plate XIX. In both cases there are sometimes formal designs in relief upon the ware, usually in a fretwork or other geometrical pattern.

In the province of Chêkiang a factory seems to have existed at Hsiang-shan, which produced ware of the Ting type in the Southern Sung dynasty; we know very little at present about

¹ The effect is often likened also to the surface of an ostrich's egg.

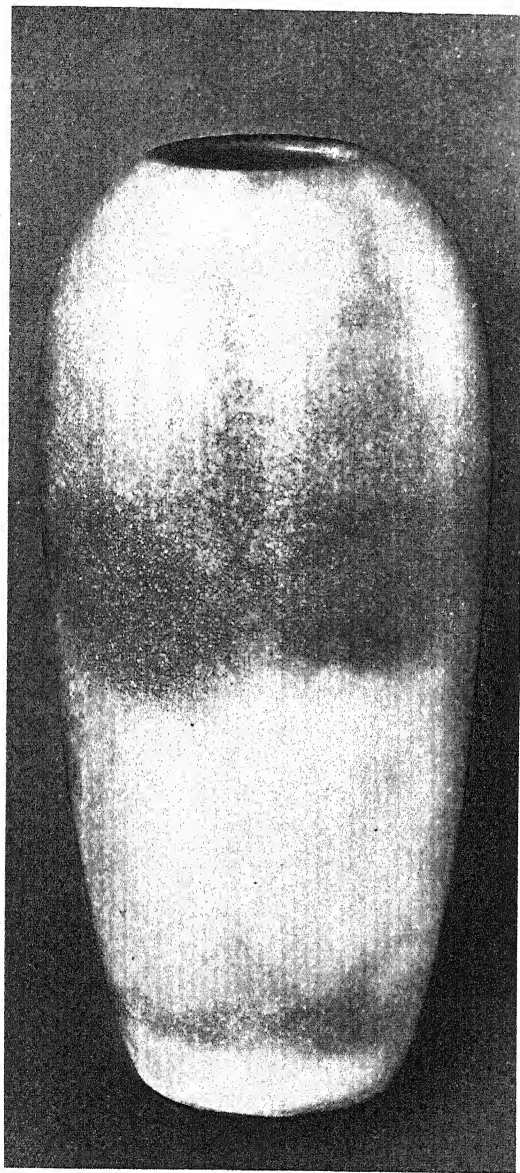


PLATE XIX. Kiangnan Ting yao: OVOID VASE
with "ostrich" egg glaze. 10 in. high. Probably
Ming dynasty. *Baird Collection.* (p. 126.)

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its products, but literary references to it are fairly complimentary, describing its best examples as rich and lustrous, with a crab's claw crackle.

Our list of factories producing wares closely related to the Ting yao is already a substantial one, and proves the high esteem in which these early white wares were held. But there are still other factories which it will be convenient to dispose of here. In the province of Kiangsi at Nan-fêng Hsien and at Chi Chou there were factories at work during the Sung and Yüan dynasties, and we find somewhat particular reference to the latter in the *T'ao Shuo*, in fact the description accorded to it is as lengthy as that devoted to the Chün yao. We are told that the Chi Chou ware resembled the purple Ting but was of thick make. During the Sung dynasty there were five potteries, but those controlled by one Shu Kung were the most eminent : he made white and brown pieces with good crackle. Apparently Shu had a daughter, who was even more skilled than her father in the production of incense burners and vases of merit. The body is spoken of as being greyish-white and covered with a black or ashy coloured (*yu*) glaze. The factory was closed before the end of the Southern Sung dynasty; for we are told that when a Sung Minister of State was passing through, the contents of the kilns turned into jade ! The potters were terrified at the possible results and fled to Ching-tê Chên, where they could ply their trade without being subjected to such disconcerting episodes.

Finally there are the modern imitations of

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Ting yao. Owing to the high price which is given for fine quality specimens of Sung Ting, it is only natural that the ingenious potter of to-day in China or Japan should try and get more than the market price of modern goods for his efforts. The designs in the modern specimens I have seen are very stiffly drawn and are in too pronounced relief to be satisfying: the fact that the "tear-marks" are on the wrong side has already been mentioned. The shapes and foot-finishes are also slightly wrong; the bowls have too much curvature, or it is in the wrong place, and displays the craftsmanship of the modern "thrower."

The existence of these imitations only adds to the zest and excitement of collecting, and it would be a poor spirit which was entirely damped by the knowledge of danger.

CHAPTER X

LUNG-CH'ÜAN YAO AND RELATED CELADONS

WE have more direct evidence concerning this group of wares than we have of most of the earlier types. There is not only a considerable amount of literary data to help us, but a number of specimens is fortunately available for study and admiration. The celadons constitute, in the opinion of many collectors, the most artistically pleasing of all the early glazes: their delicacy of colouring and their subtle softness of texture cannot but appeal to all, while the shapes usually employed for the display of the glaze comprise a range of simple forms which are equally restful to the eye. Though copied more or less successfully, the quality of glaze possessed by the Sung prototypes seems never to have been attained by the potters of later times.

Lung-ch'üan, from which the ware derives its name, is a town in the south-west of Chê-kiang, the province in which Hang Chou, the capital of the Southern Sung dynasty, is situated. The Lung-ch'üan wares of Sung and Yüan times may be divided into three main categories and subdivided again according to colour and make. In the Sung dynasty proper it seems probable that the ware, though fine in paste, was heavily built and the technique hardly up to the standard reached in the Southern Sung dynasty. The *Ch'ing-pi-ts'ang*¹ tells us "Ancient Lung-ch'üan porcelain is of finely worked paste but thick fabric. The colour is a deep grass-

¹ Quoted in the *T'ao Shuo*, Book II.

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green. The best is considered equal to the Imperial ware but it has neither crackles nor brown mouth nor iron coloured foot. It wears wonderfully well and is not readily cracked or broken, but the workmanship is rather clumsy, and the designs neither antique nor artistic. Some pieces formed of white paste are covered outside with the green glaze so thinly that traces of the white body show through. This was made by Chang, who lived during the Sung dynasty, and it is consequently called also Chang porcelain. He adopted the Lung-ch'üan methods of manufacture and improved upon them in the fineness of his work and excellence of his designs."

Prior therefore to the ware made by Chang, whose products form our second category, there appears to have been a factory or factories at Lung-ch'üan producing a celadon ware. Indeed, it seems highly probable that celadons were made in the Sung dynasty elsewhere than at Lung-ch'üan, and that the Honan factories also exploited this type of article. In any case it is clear, as we shall see presently, that there were factories in North China which produced analogous porcelains.

The second category consists of wares produced from kilns under the direction and control of a potter named Chang. There were two brothers of this name, natives of Ch'u Chou, who lived, Dr. Hirth¹ tells us, in the Southern Sung dynasty (1127-1279). They set up their factories at a place called Liu-t'ien about twenty miles from Lung-ch'üan and produced different

¹ *Ancient Chinese Porcelain*, by F. Hirth.

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porcelains. The elder brother made what was called Ko porcelain, but it is the younger brother's work which must claim our attention first; for to him and to those working under him are to be attributed the specimens so highly prized by European collectors, and perhaps even more by Chinese and Japanese connoisseurs.

The younger Chang seems to have been specially renowned for his thin ware and for the beautiful jade-like glaze he imparted to it. Specimens of the thin type are rare and not often seen in this country; we cannot be surprised at only a small percentage surviving the vicissitudes of some eight or nine hundred years, and any that still exist are, no doubt, the prized possessions of Chinese and Japanese collectors. But a few of the "wasters" dug up on the old kiln site, which have found their way to London, give us direct evidence of this thin ware, while sundry illustrations of specimens in Hsiang's Album¹ furnish additional confirmation of written descriptions.

While examples of this thin type are rare, the heavier-built specimens of the younger Chang's art are fortunately not uncommon, though perfect specimens are very expensive and only rarely reach this country. Before describing the different glaze colours employed and the various designs commonly used in their decoration, we must first note the features of the body. The paste is of a whitish or stone-grey colour when examined at a fracture subse-

¹ *Porcelain of Different Dynasties*, by Hsiang Yüan-pien, translated by S. W. Bushell.

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quent to firing; where the glaze has run thinly, the paste gleams white through it. Where, however, the paste has been exposed to the heat of the kiln without glaze protection, it exhibits a red colour; sometimes the red is a bright brick-red and sometimes it is of a duller red-brown tone. The red is due to the iron in the clay becoming oxidised during the firing, and the varying tones of colour are no doubt accounted for by the different amounts of iron present or by variations in the firing temperature. When the red colour is not too predominant the paste on the exposed foot exhibits a putty-like appearance, which is characteristic.

The glaze on Sung specimens varies in colour from a pale blue through shades of green to grey; the most entirely satisfying from an artistic point of view is perhaps the green colour resembling jade, which was what Chang the Younger was striving to represent. But whatever may be the precise colour tone, the glaze has a softness of texture and an absence of the glassiness which characterises the later productions. A good specimen of the ware is seen on Plate XX. It is a vase with ring handles attached by glaze to the sides; the glaze has a beautiful texture and the much-prized bluish celadon colour. The vase is a kiln-site waster, having been thrown out, no doubt, owing to its deformed lip.

Specimens of the bluish-grey Lung-ch'üan ware are known under the Japanese title of *Kinuta seiji*. *Kinuta* means mallet, and a favourite shape was a vase in the form of a mallet. A

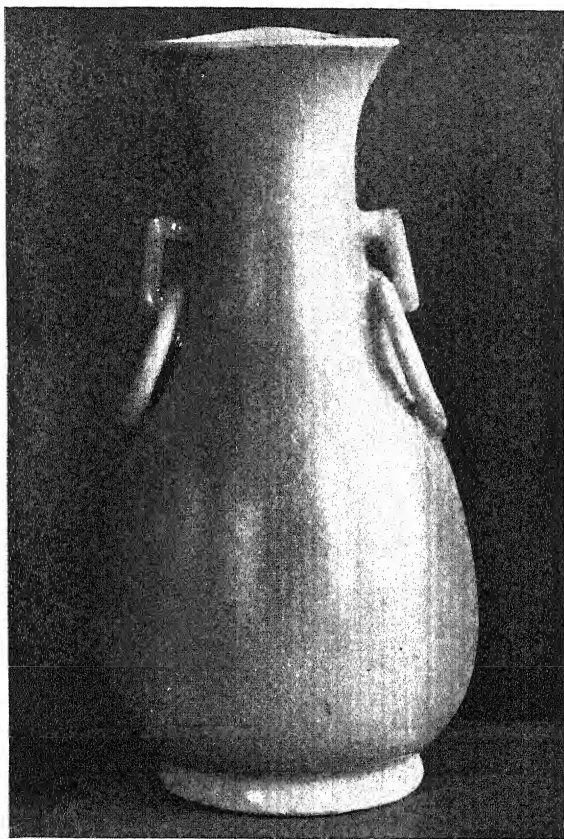


PLATE XX. Lung-ch'üan yao : VASE with ring handles
and bluish celadon glaze. $8\frac{1}{4}$ in. high. Sung dynasty.
Harris Collection. (p. 132.)

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celebrated vase of this shape in Japan gave rise to the generic name *Kinuta*, which is often applied to the ware as a whole.

The objects made appear to have been plates, dishes, vases of different forms, bowls and vessels for the scholar's table such as brush rests, water droppers, etc., which sometimes took the form of animals.

The kinds of decoration employed may be grouped into four classes, and in addition there are specimens which depend for their beauty on glaze and shape alone. Some of these last may exhibit a crazing of the glaze, as distinct from a controlled crackle, but the majority show a smooth and uninterrupted surface.

The first form of decoration which we must note is that produced by carving or etching the body itself with a fine point and thereafter covering the object with glaze, which, owing to its translucency and thinness of application allows the decoration to appear with distinctness. The next class consists of a decoration produced in relief by pressing the soft paste in an intaglio mould before applying the glaze; the vase shown on Plate XXI is representative. Another not uncommon type in this category is exemplified in pencil washing dishes, with one or two fish moulded in strong relief on the bottom and covered with glaze, so that they look as if they were swimming in it.

The third class depends for its decoration on the property of the paste turning a reddish-brown on being subjected to the heat of the kiln. The intaglio mould is applied but no glaze is

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placed on the relief ornament; in consequence the relief turns a reddish-brown colour and stands out prominently amid the surrounding glaze.

A fourth class comprises the spotted celadons or what the Japanese term *tobi seiiji*. The effect consists of patches of brown upon the celadon glaze and is produced by the addition of splashes of a different glaze upon the main glaze.

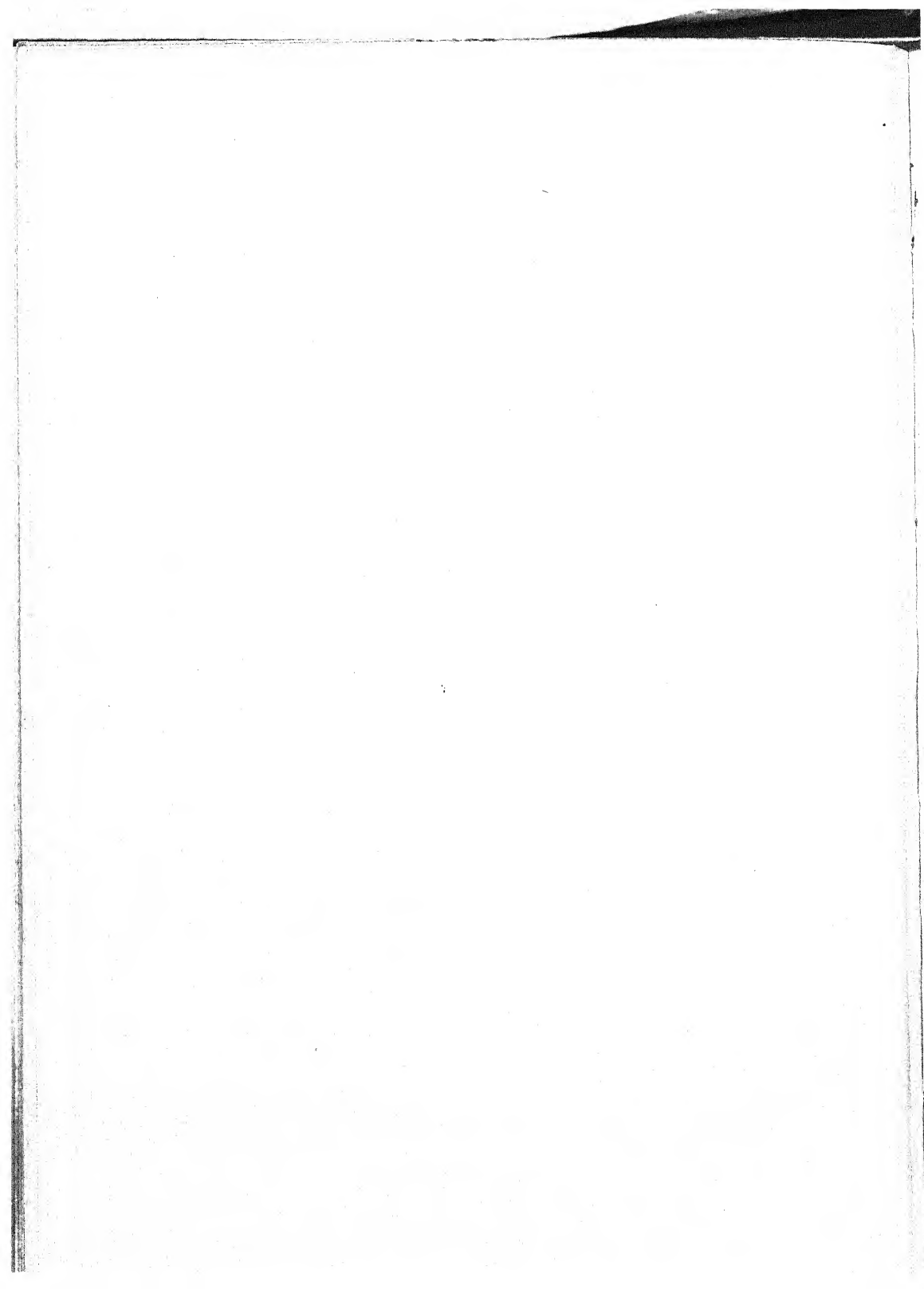
We have now examined the range of the younger Chang's art, as it is described in literary records and exemplified by specimens obtained from the Lung-ch'üan kiln-sites. If further evidence of their Sung origin is required, the catalogue¹ produced by the Metropolitan Museum of New York provides confirmation. Two specimens are there described which present features identical with those possessed by certain of the foregoing examples, and these were excavated from the ruins of Rhages in Persia which was destroyed in 1256.

The mention of Persia brings us to the distribution of this celadon ware. The name celadon is thought to be derived from that of the shepherd Céladon (a character in a seventeenth-century novel called *L'Astrée* written by Honoré d'Urfé), whose garb of grey-green cloth became so well known as to add a tone to the list of recognised shades of green. Another idea that has been suggested more recently is that the name is derived from Saladin, who sent forty pieces of the ware to Nur-ed-din in Damascus in 1171. In Persian countries the

¹ *Catalogue of an Exhibition of Early Chinese Pottery and Sculpture*, by S. C. Bosch Reitz.



PLATE XXI. Lung-ch'uan yao: VASE with cut-down mouth, green celadon glaze and floral decoration in relief. 6 in. high. Sung dynasty. *Baird Collection.* (p. 133.)



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ware was known as Martabani : this name finds its origin from the Gulf of Martaban on which the important sea-port of Moulmein is situated. Moulmein is at the mouth of the Salween river, the upper waters of which are in Yunnan; and the ware may have been transported to Moulmein by road and river or, what is more likely, exported to that town from one of the ports in the Amoy district, by sea. That the trade in the ware was widely distributed is proved by the fact that specimens of it have been found in localities so distant from the source of origin as Java, Sumatra, the Philippines, Borneo, India, Persia, Arabia, Egypt and Zanzibar. The Imperial collections in Constantinople contain specimens added in the Middle Ages; while in England we have evidence of the existence of one specimen as far back as 1530, when Archbishop Warham bequeathed his famous celadon bowl to New College, Oxford.

In India the ware is called *ghori* ware; a name derived from the town of Ghoor on the Persian-Afghanistan frontier and the seat of government of the Ghori Emperors of India.

The type of article forming the basis of this far-flung trade were heavily-built vessels, generally massive plates and dishes which endured without mishap the rough handling to which they must have been subjected. The finer ware would not have survived mediæval transport, and native buyers in any case exhibited too keen an appreciation of its artistic merits to allow the foreigner to acquire specimens of it in quantity. The superstitious belief that

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these celadon dishes were proof against poison may have been an additional reason for their preservation.

We have spent some time in describing the ware which bears the name of the younger Chang and which was manufactured during the Sung and Yüan dynasties: before proceeding to enumerate the features of the later examples produced at a different centre in continuation of the younger Chang's traditions, it is necessary to dispose of our third main category—Ko ware. Ko Ko means elder brother, and Ko yao, or the Elder Brother's ware, is the name given to the productions of the elder Chang. Tradition and literary data point to the fact that, like his brother, the elder Chang was a potter with a factory at Lung-ch'üan; but unfortunately we have nothing like the same evidence of authenticated specimens of his art as we have of Chang the Younger.

Ko ware is not usually grouped with Lung-ch'üan yao, but while most of the specimens attributed to the elder Chang or his assistants differ very considerably from the Lung-ch'üan porcelains, we cannot ignore the circumstantial evidence that exists of their similar provenance, and for this reason an attempt is made to describe the ware in this chapter rather than elsewhere.

The Chinese books give rather conflicting accounts of the characteristics of Ko yao: one describes the colour of the glaze as green, another as nearly white, but there is general agreement that the glaze was intentionally crackled. We have seen that the porcelain fabricated by the

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younger Chang was not crackled, though there may be a fortuitous crazing; the distinguishing characteristic of the elder brother's work was a well-marked "hundred-fold crackle," occurring in a thick marble-like glaze. So distinctive was this feature thought to be, that the eighteenth-century crackled wares—and particularly the white crackled ware—go by the generic title of Ko ware. The point is mentioned because, failing actual contemporary specimens, some value must be placed on the evidence afforded by the later imitations of the ancient wares.

If the elder Chang worked with supplies of clay obtained from the same locality as his brother, it is fair to assume that the bodies of the two types of ware were similar and that their red colour was due to iron oxidation. In that case we may describe specimens of intentionally crackled ware of the Lung-ch'üan type as Ko ware. This would be a comforting theory to collectors in the possession of crackled specimens of obviously Lung-ch'üan origin. In the absence of indisputable data, such a classification must be tentative at best, but those who can afford to hold an optimistic opinion, and who have not to substantiate their belief on grounds firmer than conscientious conjecture, may exhibit with glee a piece of crackled celadon of early date with a Lung-ch'üan paste as a genuine example of Ko yao. The specimen shown on Plate XXII might be so discussed.

On the other hand, the specimens of Ko yao which are usually so attributed differ considerably from the Lung-ch'üan type. One beautiful

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example of the Sung potter's art, which has been so classified by Mr. Hobson, is illustrated in colour in his *Chinese Pottery and Porcelain*, vol. i, Plate XIX. It is oval-shaped, with a reddish-brown stoneware body and a smooth marble-like glaze of dove-grey colour with wide crackle. To my mind this specimen gives the impression of Kuan yao rather than Ko yao; the vase possesses the characteristic qualities of the Sung Imperial ware and resembles several of the specimens illustrated in Hsiang's Album.

If the examples which are usually described as Ko yao were made by Chang the Elder and his school, they must have been constructed from a very different clay from that used by the Chang the Younger in the Lung-ch'üan district. That there was a good deal of similarity between examples of Kuan yao and Ko yao is proved by the reference to the two wares in the *Po-wu-yao-lan*, which states: "The Kuan porcelain exhibits throughout faint lines like crab's claws, while the Ko porcelain has throughout faint marks like fish roe, but the glaze of the latter does not equal that of the former." If there had not been a considerable likeness between the two wares, this early seventeenth-century work would hardly have contrasted them thus in the passage quoted.

During the Yüan dynasty, the Lung-ch'üan yao probably did not differ materially from that produced in the Sung period; but, as we have seen in Chapter II, the Mongol regime considerably extended intercourse with the West, and no doubt the heavy Martabani ware was an



PLATE XXII. Lung-ch'üan yao, possibly Ko yao:
INCENSE BURNER on tripod feet. Green, crackled,
celadon glaze. $4\frac{1}{2}$ in. high. Sung dynasty. *Author's*
Collection. (p. 137.)

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excellent commercial product. It is a fair assumption, perhaps, that the larger number of trading centres throughout the Empire stimulated the output of the solid and decorative celadons, and that many of the specimens found outside China date from the Yüan dynasty.

This is mainly conjecture from *a priori* reasoning, but we do know that on the establishment of the Ming dynasty, the Lung-chüan factories were moved from that centre to Ch'u Chou, which is about seventy miles from it. There the manufacture was continued, but we are told that while the body paste was similar—white with the property of turning red when exposed to the fire—the ware was coarser and not up to the Sung standard. We learn also that the Ko porcelain “fabricated anew at the close of the Yüan dynasty was clumsy in make, opaque and bad in colour.”¹ Native tradition, according to Hirth,² holds that by the end of the Ming dynasty celadon porcelain ceased to be made at Ch'u Chou.

On these data we have to attempt an attribution of the various types of heavy celadon ware which have been found in so many widely separated countries. The plates and dishes have glazed bases which exhibit, as a rule, an unglazed red-brown ring. Which are Sung products, which are Yüan, and which are Ming? Probably there is no more vexed question in Chinese ceramics, nor one which is less easy to answer. All that can be done is to suggest possible lines of demarcation, with the knowledge that the degrees of variation are ill-defined even if they

¹ T'ao Shuo, Book II. ² *Ancient Chinese Porcelain*.

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are to be regarded as marking essential differences.

The specimens with a glassy, vitreous glaze, which is, as a rule, of a darkish green colour, are universally accepted as of Ming origin. But those with a freshness of colour and a luscious depth of glaze are far more difficult to date. Many of them may also be Ming examples made at Ch'u Chou, but in cases where the decoration is well drawn and the general technique good, there is considerable argument in favour of a Sung or Yüan origin. Personally, and in a case like this everyone must use his or her own judgment, I favour a Yüan origin for a large proportion of this type of celadon ware. My belief is based on historical facts. No one can deny that the Mongol empire was one of the most widely flung in the history of the world, or that during its sway Chinese trade was extended to a degree that never existed before—not even under the T'ang dynasty. One can imagine a Mongol official arriving at the Lung-ch'üan factories and the following kind of conversation taking place:—

Mongol Official. “I would have you know that this country is now part of an Empire, the extent of which you doubtless do not realise. Our trading extends thousands of miles; our ships and caravans go all over the world. We have excellent customers as far West as the Black Sea and throughout Persia who would like this green ware that you make.”

Lung-ch'üan Potter. “But we make, as a rule, delicate things, which would never carry such distances.”

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Mongol Official. "Well, you can start and make, in greater quantities, heavier things which will carry well and without damage. Send me samples in a week."

After some grumbling, no doubt, the potter complied with the mandate, and next year the order was doubled, and so on. The potters found that less exact finishes and less intricate work met the case, and that the heavier ware could be turned out rapidly. The large quantities ordered and supplied soon swelled their profit and loss accounts on the right side and their pleasure increased accordingly. The neighbouring potters at Chin Ts'un and Li Shui followed suit and the news spread north to Honan and elsewhere. Such is my conception of what may have taken place.

We must next examine the wares related to the Lung-ch'üan porcelains. There are first the other Chêkiang factories: at Chin T'sun and at Li Shui, both places not very distant from Lung-ch'üan, similar celadons were produced, though the Chinese records point to their being inferior in quality. These centres were at work during the Sung and Yüan dynasties but did not persist later, so far as can be ascertained. Some of the less distinguished pre-Ming specimens were no doubt manufactured in these towns, but at this distance of time and without kiln-site evidence we cannot identify the wares.

A more important group of factories, which in all probability produced celadon wares, are some of the Honan centres. It is difficult to believe that, if the Chêkiang potters were making

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a good thing out of celadons, the Honan potters did not try and do likewise. There were at least seven important centres at work in that province during the Sung and Yüan dynasties; some of them were producing special wares for which they were famous and of which a description is given elsewhere. These, perhaps, confined their attention to their own specialities, but some of the less noted and those exhibiting more catholicity in their endeavours probably manufactured excellent celadons. Probable centres which can be considered in this connexion are the factories in the immediate neighbourhood of K'ai-fêng Fu, including the town of Ch'ên Liu. Among the wares produced near K'ai-fêng Fu, which, as we have seen, was the capital in the Sung dynasty before 1127, the *Ko-ku-yao-lun*¹ speaks of a ware of a "pale green colour marked with fine crackle lines and which has usually a brown mouth and iron-coloured foot." Such a description clearly points to what we know as a celadon ware, and probably quite a number of specimens which differ from the Lung-ch'üan type in paste and glaze, but with other similarities in beauty of workmanship, are to be ascribed to these Honan potters.

The *K'ao-p'an-yü-shih*² tells us that there were "pots of winter green porcelain in the form of a chrysanthemum flower with an ovoid vessel standing upon round feet in the midst of the petals." The spoken words *tung ch'ing*, which may mean either "Eastern green" or "winter green," have different written characters, though

¹ Quoted in the *T'ao Shuo*, Book II.

² *Ibid.*, Book IV.

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the tones are the same. Apparently a confusion between *tung* (Eastern) and *tung* (winter) is not uncommon and may have occurred in this passage, which seems to add some weight to the theory that wares of the celadon type were manufactured at the Eastern capital (K'ai-fêng Fu) or in its vicinity.

Another centre of manufacture of celadons was the province of Kuangtung. At some of the factories round about Canton, celadon ware, not dissimilar from the Lung-ch'üan type, seems to have been made contemporaneously with the Lung-ch'üan and Ch'u Chou wares. Characteristic specimens often take the form of figures, such as statuettes of the Goddess Kuan Yin. The figure and garb are covered with a celadon glaze, but the face is left free of it; as a result the unprotected biscuit¹ assumes a dark brown colour and gives a swarthy appearance to the person represented. Figures were also made at Lung-ch'üan, but the biscuit faces of specimens from those factories are redder and of a much lighter shade. The quality of the Canton celadons is distinctly inferior to those from the Lung-ch'üan kilns both in modelling and glaze.

Our next group of related wares is that embraced by the conveniently vague term Northern Chinese. "When in doubt say Northern Chinese" is as good advice to a collector of Chinese ceramics when confronted with a dubious Sung celadon, as the similar phrase is to the whist player when he does not know what suit to lead.

¹ The paste before application of the glaze, or where left unglazed, is called "biscuit."

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The result is not dissimilar, for he is not likely to get trumped !

If we look at a map of China, the northern provinces are seen to be Shensi, Shansi, Chihli and Shantung, and broadly speaking these comprise the country north of the Yellow River before its course was changed in 1852. In these provinces there were factories operating during the Sung dynasty, though most of them, from literary evidence, were engaged upon the manufacture of wares other than celadons. But just as some of the Honan factories probably added to their profits by making celadons, so these other centres still further north very likely found that the demand justified the supply.

The specimens which are usually so ascribed are vases, bowls and plates of an olive-green colour with a glaze of a more glassy texture than the Lung-ch'üan glaze. Many are beautifully decorated with carved floral designs, and some have their attractiveness enhanced by incised cloud or wave effects as settings for the design itself, achieved by combing the paste before the glaze is applied. Plate XXIII shows a vase with a glaze of the type described. Fragments of this kind of ware were discovered at Samarra (see p. 77) and have also been found buried in the northern province of Kansu.

One of the reasons for giving these wares a northern provenance is their resemblance to Korean examples of a similar nature. The typical Korean finish is lacking, and the marks left by the "spurs," or the tiny piles of sand, on the small circular foot-rims are absent; but



PLATE XXIII. Northern Chinese celadon : VASE with expanding foliate mouth, carved ornament and dark olive-green glaze. $4\frac{3}{4}$ in. high. Sung dynasty. *Winkworth Collection.* (p. 144.)



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if these Korean potting features were added, there would be little or no difference to be detected. The Korean potters, no doubt in large part emigrants from China, followed the Sung style and based their art upon Chinese motives and shapes. So it is that we find difficulty in differentiating between the two sets of ware, apart from potting technique; and we are forced to give this vague term Northern Chinese to wares which it is impossible to classify more narrowly in the absence of kiln-site evidence.

But Korea is not the only extra-mural ware to which reference must be made in discussing the celadons. As early as the Sung dynasty, and probably earlier, Chinese potters were established at Sawankalok in Siam, some two hundred miles north of Bangkok, and we know a good deal about the kind of ware produced thereat from wasters dug up from the kiln-site. There are representative collections of these, both in the British and Victoria and Albert Museums. The body consists of a coarse, heavy, grey-white paste which shows red at the base. The vessels, which are chiefly bowls and vases, seem to have been baked, supported on tubular uprights; as a result a small circular ring is frequently, but not invariably, found on the base. These tubular supports were of varying heights and served the purpose of raising the vases, etc., so that they were not brought into contact with the embers and ashes of the kiln in which they were fired.¹

¹ A description of these kilns will be found in an article written by Mr. T. H. Lyle in the *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, vol. xxxiii, 1903.

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The glaze, unlike the Lung-ch'üan glaze, is thin and watery, varying in colour from a pale green to a pale blue-green. Brown and purple glazes are also found on the Sawankalok wares.

In concluding this description of the early celadons reference must be made to the later imitations of Chinese and Japanese origin. At Ching-tê Chên, celadon ware was produced in quantities during the Ming and Ch'ing dynasties, and there is no particular reason to suppose that in the earlier days of the ceramic metropolis, before the Ming dynasty, some effort at producing celadons was not attempted; though the not far distant Chêkiang factories probably set a standard with which Ching-tê Chên in those times could not compete.

In the eighteenth century, when Ching-tê Chên reigned practically supreme, good celadons, with or without crackle, were turned out; but there is little difficulty in distinguishing them from their Sung and Yüan prototypes. The body is of fine white porcelain which, though generally disguised with a coating of brown ferruginous clay at the foot-rim, is not difficult to detect. The colour of the glaze was obtained by adding a pinch of cobalt, and there is consequently a more predominant blue tone in most examples.

The imitations made in Japan present more difficulty in their detection. The foot-rims often show a natural red tinge, though generally dressed with ferruginous clay in more complete imitation of the old iron-foot. The Japanese potters have very successfully copied the typical features of the Lung-ch'üan glaze, so much so that it needs an

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experienced eye to discard the copy on glaze examination alone. Needless to say the most highly prized shapes, such as the *kinuta* vases, are those exploited. Good modern specimens are most desirable examples of the potter's art, and provided one does not pay the price of a twelfth-century piece for a twentieth-century article, a collection is strengthened in some respects by their inclusion.

CHAPTER XI

TZ'Ü CHOU YAO

Tz'ü CHOU is in the province of Chihli, though it was formerly in Honan. The character which denotes the township is the same as that used for crockery, and "Crockery Town" is a fitting name; for ware is still manufactured there and it has been a pottery centre since the Sui dynasty. In fact there is no place in China which has had a longer and more continuous connexion with ceramics.

But while length of service stands to its credit, the Tz'ü Chou factory did not produce ware which was held in the highest esteem in China. The *T'ao Shuo*, quoting the *Ko-ku-yao-lun*, speaks of the ware as resembling Ting yao in its best examples but there were no "tear-marks." It included pieces with engraved decoration, specimens with painted ornamentation, and plain pieces. The products dating from the Yüan dynasty were reckoned of no account.

Hsiang's Album contains no representatives of the group, and it is clear that, in Chinese estimation, the ware was regarded as more suitable for domestic use than for the scholar's table or the delectation of the virtuoso. But, as in the case of the Chün yao, later connoisseurs have put considerable value on the early examples, some of which are certainly noble in form and exhibit high artistic qualities.

Apart from the resemblance of certain examples to the Ting type of ware, the chief difficulty which the collector of to-day will

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experience, will be in deciding which specimens of obvious Tz'ü Chou origin were made in the Sung and Yüan dynasties and which are to be attributed to subsequent periods. The traditions of the factory have evidently undergone little or no change, and it is extremely difficult to determine which specimens are of Sung origin and which of Ming or of even later date. Although, as stated, the centre was in being before the Sung dynasty, the wares produced before that time were probably of a crude nature; and it is unlikely that extant examples are common, as the output was then on a relatively small scale.

The body is a hard porcellanous stoneware of a somewhat coarse grain; the colour is usually greyish-white; sometimes the paste has a yellowish tone and in less frequent examples the body is a reddish stoneware, if the specimens with painted ornament under blue or green glazes described later on p. 151 are in fact products of Tz'ü Chou.

The technique frequently used in the glaze application was to apply a coating of white slip and then to place upon it a transparent film of glaze. But other methods were also employed, and it is necessary to describe the various main types in detail.

The class which will be met with most frequently consists of large heavily-built vases of various shapes covered with a white glaze on which designs are painted in black or dark brown. These designs are usually floral in character and often arranged in bands running

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round the vase. Sometimes simple scenes are found painted in a similar fashion, with one or more figures of persons set in panels surrounded by scroll work. These panelled vases may be of Ming origin and specimens of the type exist which bear a Ming date. While it is impossible to dogmatise on the subject, a collector will probably be wise to attribute this type to a period later than the Sung dynasty.

Besides vases and large bowls decorated in this way, pillows are not uncommon. Figures of Lohans, of Kuan Yin and of various notables are frequently met with, but many, if not most, of the specimens usually seen are later products of Tz'ü Chou; in Sung specimens fine and strong modelling must be exhibited and harmony of the black, or brown, or red colouring on the white glaze must be achieved. In the Ming and Manchu examples there is a crudeness of colour application and a sloppiness in the modelling which betray a weaker art; in fact most of these figures, of which there are considerable numbers on the market, have very little decorative value.

Figuring in black or brown on a white glaze was not the only form of painted ornamentation. Specimens which bear every sign of Sung workmanship, with floral designs executed with boldness in brick red, green and yellow enamels, are not impossible to find; and these constitute the few manifestations of polychrome decoration in the Sung dynasty.

Before passing to the next division of the Tz'ü Chou wares, viz. those belonging to the

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etched or engraved category, we must describe another form of painted ware, the provenance of which is somewhat uncertain.

It has been customary to place among the Tz'ü Chou wares a well-defined group of specimens with painted black ornamentation under a transparent blue or green glaze. The body of these examples consists of a reddish stoneware and the painted designs take the form of panels of figures or of flowers and leaves. The body is unlike the usual Tz'ü Chou paste and the attribution given is no doubt based on the technique employed in the painted decoration. In the light of later evidence we may have reason to place this group of wares to the credit of another factory. In this connexion it is important to note a description given by Mr. Laufer¹ of a small dish excavated from a Sung tomb at Wei Hsien in Shantung. Mr. Laufer describes the dish as possessing "a beautiful gobelin-blue crackled glaze" and as made of a finer clay than the other specimens found at the same place; the bottom of the inside of the dish shows ornamentation painted in black. There appear to be analogies between this specimen and the group now under consideration.

The Tz'ü Chou potters evidently made considerable use of the engraving tool, for the next class includes a variety of beautiful effects produced by glaze and etching in combination. The most common method consisted in covering the body with white slip, and carving away the slip so as to leave the pattern in slight relief;

¹ *Chinese Pottery of the Han Dynasty*, Appendix II, p. 316.

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the vessel was then covered with a transparent glaze which left the relief decoration standing out in brilliant white in contrast to the warm grey of the body with its covering film of glaze. If the reader looks at Plate XXIV, he will get an impression of the effect described. Another plan adopted was to cover the vessel before firing with a fairly thick, dark brown glaze, without the interposition of a slip, and to scrape away the groundwork, so that after firing the design stood out against the buff-coloured biscuit. On Plate XXV will be seen an example of this technique.

A less common variety is that in which the design is traced with an etching tool through a brown or black glaze down to the white slip but not down to the body itself. The result is that the design shows up in white tracery on a brown or black background. In other cases the body is carved with a design and the whole subsequently covered with white slip and glazed as shown on Plate XXVI.

All the methods used by the Tz'ü Chou potters are included in these processes or combinations of them. By ringing the changes and substituting different coloured slips or different coloured glazes, or by increasing the degree to which the slip is removed and the body exposed, a wide range of effects was obtained.

Occasionally a combination of the white slip technique and the black glaze is found. On Plate XXVII will be seen an ovoid vase with loop handles, the lower portion of which is glazed in black and the upper portion with white slip



PLATE XXIV. Tz'ü Chou yao : WINE POT with white slip etched away in floral design, the whole covered with transparent glaze. 7 in. high. Sung dynasty. *Harris Collection.* (p. 152.)



PLATE XXV. Tz'ü Chou yao : EGG-SHAPED VASE
with thick, brown-black glaze, carved to biscuit in
floral design. 11 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. high. Sung dynasty. *Wink-*
worth Collection. (p. 152.)

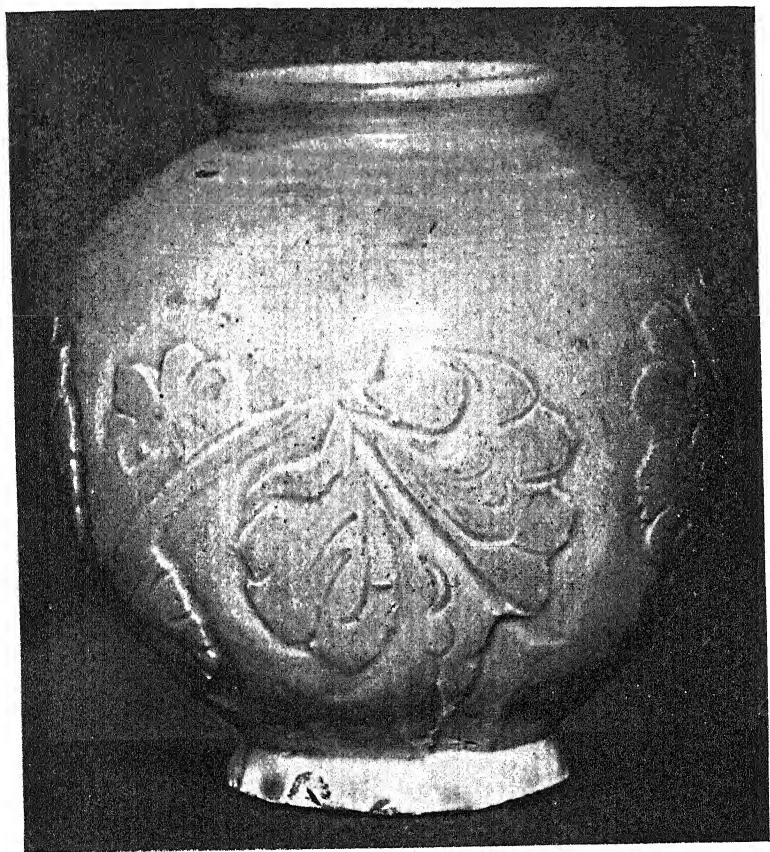


PLATE XXVI. Tz'u Chou yao: GLOBULAR VASE with carved design, covered with white slip and creamy glaze. $5\frac{1}{2}$ in. high. Sung dynasty. *Eumorfopoulos Collection.* (p. 152.)



PLATE XXVII. Tz'ü Chou type: OVOID VASE with four flat loop handles, with white slip and black glaze. $8\frac{1}{4}$ in. high. Sung dynasty. *Winkworth Collection.* (p. 152.)

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and transparent glaze but with figuring in black glaze as well.

It will be realised that the number of methods practised by the Tz'ü Chou potters was considerable, and if a collector desires to obtain a representative collection of the ware, he will need to have considerable space at his disposal; especially as the vases which constitute the usual subject of decoration are bulky. Small specimens are not too easy to find.

There is a large group of wares which show considerable similarity to the Tz'ü Chou wares, both in technique and in paste. So far as the body is concerned, the ware seems identical with the Tz'ü Chou yao and is a grey stoneware. The white slip and transparent glaze technique is found, with or without etched or carved designs. Some have self-colour glazes, either black or dark brown, similar to those described in the next chapter, and frequently with some indication of "hare's fur" markings. Specimens of this type have been dug up at Külühsien in Chihli, which is 70 miles north-east of Tz'ü Chou. The old town of Külühsien was inundated and destroyed in A.D. 1108, so that the specimens recently unearthed could not have been made later than that date. They comprise mainly vases, bowls, dishes and saucers, which, owing to burial, have become stained in the crazing of the glaze and often show passages of reddish or brown colour. A bowl, with crinkled lid, of the type in question is shown on Plate XVII, fig. 2. Quite conceivably the ware owes its origin to Tz'ü Chou, as there does not seem

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to be any evidence of kilns on the site. Beyond proving the early date of the ware found at this place, these discoveries do not carry us very far. Still less do the fragments, recently unearthed in the north-west of Shansi, establish new facts of scientific importance. Many interesting portions of vessels have been found at Tokoto and other places in Shansi destroyed in frontier fights with the Mongols. These were recovered from the surfaces of the sites of these towns, mostly ploughed up by cultivators: the fragments comprise pieces of Chün ware, of Lung-ch'üan celadon, of blue and white ware and of various types showing the usual Tz'ü Chou technique as well as the black Chien-like glazes on a grey stoneware body. In the neighbourhood complete specimens resembling some of these fragments have been obtained. Surface finds of this nature cannot be regarded as evidence of their early date of production, as they may have become buried in comparatively recent times. Still less do they afford evidence of local manufacture at these places.

So far as glaze is concerned, the Tz'ü Chou wares with a black glaze, showing the "hare's fur" type of marking, bear close resemblance to those classed as Honan in the next chapter; but the body of the latter group is different and serves to provide a line of demarcation. The difference between the Honan body and the Tz'ü Chou body is represented fairly by the difference between sea-shore sand dried in the sun and damp.

With regard to imitations and forgeries, the

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collector need have little fear of specimens which do not owe their manufacture to Tz'ü Chou potters; but the town is still a flourishing centre of the potting industry, and no doubt the ware made is designed on archaic lines on much the same principle as that followed by Messrs. Wedgwood and other great English potters who make replicas of famous prototypes. Unlike the latter, however, the Chinese potters did not make a practice of adding distinguishing marks, so that the collector has to use his own powers of discrimination. There is more difficulty in distinguishing the Tz'ü Chou yao of the Sung, Yüan, Ming and Manchu dynasties and of the Republic than is the case in any other Chinese ceramic ware. Probably no other centre in the world has made "pots" for at least thirteen hundred years continuously; and Tz'ü Chou has done so, if its origin in the Sui dynasty is taken into account.

CHAPTER XII

CHIEN YAO AND RELATED WARES

THE family now to be discussed is a large and important one, which has not perhaps been given sufficient attention hitherto, and collectors will not find much difficulty in meeting representative members. Though the class does not contain the highest forms of Sung art, there is a great fascination about the bowls and cups, which form the major part of the ware.

Chien yao derives its name from the original place of manufacture, which was Chien-an in the province of Fukien. The same province contains Tê-hua which produced the well-known white porcelain, resembling milk-jelly in its colour and translucency. The factory was started at least as early as the Sung dynasty, but was moved before long to the town of Chien-yang hard by. It is known to have been operating in the Yüan dynasty and it probably preserved a fitful existence in early Ming days; but the greater importance of the neighbouring centre at Tê-hua and the overshadowing development of Ching-tê Chên probably led to its extinction by the middle of the Ming dynasty.

The Chinese literary references to the ware are not very complimentary; the *Ko-ku-yao-lun* describes the bowls and cups as having expanded mouths, with a rich black glaze which has "hare's fur" markings and which terminates in large drops. But the ware is spoken of as thick and coarse and on the whole as not worthy of high esteem. More regard is paid to the thin

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specimens "which were highly prized," but of these we know little or nothing.

Typical Chien yao has a thick, heavy body of black porcellaneous stoneware, which assumes a very dark red colour where exposed to the heat of the kiln. The *Wu-ni yao*, or black clay ware, which is referred to in the *Ko-ku-yao-lun* in connexion with the Kuan ware, is no doubt this Chien yao and was probably included in the description of Kuan yao by mistake; this is borne out by a seventeenth-century work¹ which admits the wrong inclusion of *Wu-ni yao* among the Kuan wares.

The glaze is thick and luscious; in colour it is blue-black with the characteristic streaks and mottling of golden-brown which have given rise to the terms "hare's fur" or "partridge markings." If a typical Chien bowl is examined, the glaze is generally found to have receded slightly at the mouth, and to have flowed down in increasing volume to end in a pool at the bottom. It would seem as if the flow had been arrested in mid-course and that if the potter had been unskilful, the whole bulk of the glaze would have slid down into the centre of the cup. Many examples show that in fact this did take place to a considerable extent, and the raw rim is often hidden by a collar of silver or copper. On the outside the glaze is seen to have run down in similar sluggish fashion to end in a thick roll and terminal drops, which are often of considerable size. The pool of glaze in the bottom of the cup or bowl has a

¹ The *Po-wu-yao-lan*.

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wonderful lustrous quality, the dark blue or purplish tones of which give it great beauty.

The "hare's fur" markings vary greatly in their extent, sometimes the blue-black glaze is almost obscured by their presence; while in other cases—and these are the most desirable specimens—the flecking is more widely spaced. Plate XXVIII, fig. 1, shows a good example.

The markings may assume quite a different appearance and silvery spots or "oil spots" may take the place of the golden-brown streaks. Examples of this form of marking are much rarer and are usually found on the Honan body described later. Collectors will be fortunate if they acquire an example of the "oil-spot" effect at a moderate price, as they are greatly prized in Japan.

It is hardly appropriate to describe at length the chemistry of these glaze effects. Suffice it to say that they are achieved by the judicious use of varying amounts of ferric oxide in the glaze. When the ferric oxide is in slight excess it comes out on cooling as "hare's fur" or splashes of red-brown; when in greater excess, the red-brown is more prominent and more widely disposed over the black glaze lying below. The "oil-spot" effect is caused by the aggregation of the excess of ferric oxide in a micro-crystalline structure. The effect of the markings is striking, and an interesting series may be built up, showing the various forms which they may take.

The use to which these cups and bowls were put is entertaining. The Chinese have always been fond of contests, and these bowls were used

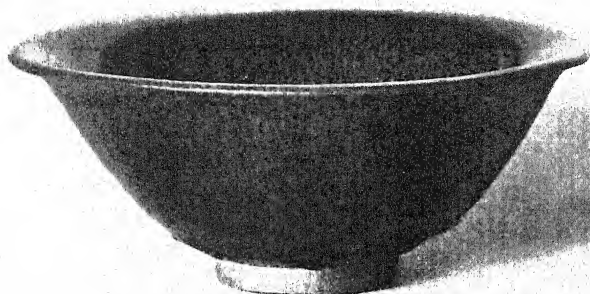


PLATE XXVIII. Fig. 1.—Chien yao: BOWL of black stoneware with black glaze and "hare's fur" markings. $6\frac{1}{2}$ in. diam. Sung dynasty. *Eumorfopoulos Collection*. (p. 158.)

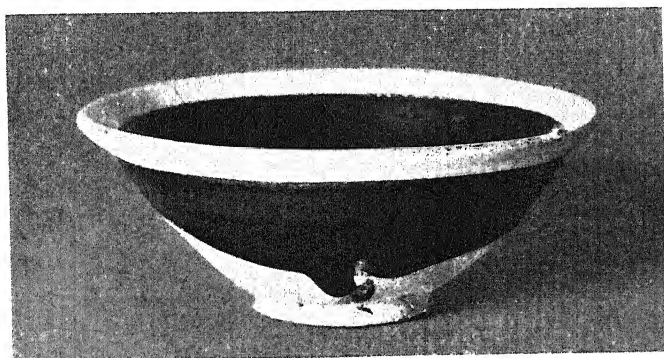


Fig. 2.—Honan ware: BOWL of buff stoneware with black glaze and white glazed rim. $4\frac{1}{4}$ in. diam. Sung dynasty. *Eumorfopoulos Collection*. (p. 162.)

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in the tea contests which had a great vogue in China during the Sung dynasty and perhaps even more in Japan in later days. This accounts for the fact that the Japanese are eager buyers of these bowls and explains why first-class specimens are scarce in Europe.

The tea contest consisted in pitting the cup owned by one person against that owned by another to decide which would retain moisture longest. The person whose cup was the last to dry completely won the game (and the stakes). The thickness of the body and the colour of the glaze lent themselves admirably to the purpose: the thick paste retained the heat and the black glaze made it easy for the judge to determine when the last atom of infused tea had disappeared. The game seems a curious one to Western minds, but, after all, roulette has no more claim as a sensible method of gambling.

These bowls were also used in the Japanese tea ceremonies which are called the *Cha no yu*. Tea was introduced into Japan from China first in 805 by a Japanese Buddhist priest, but apparently it did not find continuous favour, since it was reintroduced by another Buddhist priest in 1191. The tea ceremonies are first mentioned about two hundred years later, when the well-known tea-clubs and societies are referred to. The rules governing these ceremonies are quaint, but their description is perhaps out of place here: the tea was kept in a finely powdered condition, in artistic jars, two or three inches high, made of brown earthenware. The powdered tea was ladled out into a tea-bowl and boiling

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water was added; the concoction was stirred until it resembled a thin mixture of spinach and water and was drunk without the addition of milk or sugar. The bowl was handed round and each guest in turn sipped from it and passed it on. When empty the bowl was again passed round for examination while the host expatiated on its history, rarity and beauty.

These tea-bowls are called *temmoku* bowls in Japan, and the name is probably derived from the fact that a bowl, of Fukien origin (*i.e.* from Chien-yang), was brought to Japan during the Sung period by a Zen priest from the Zen temple on the T'ien-mu Shan or the "Eye of Heaven" mountain, which is situated in the north-west of Chêkiang. In Japanese T'ien-mu Shan becomes Temmoku-zan. The name *temmoku* is now applied to all tea-bowls with "hare's fur" marking, whether made at Chien-yang or not.

Before passing on to the extensive list of relatives of the Chien family, the imitations of the ware must be mentioned. As already stated, the Japanese set great store by these *temmoku* bowls, and copies made in Japan are far from rare. The body of these is of a finer texture than the Chinese product, which is coarse-grained; the colour of the body is of a less deep red-brown tint where exposed to view. In short, the Japanese article is a daintier thing and has a Japanese "atmosphere." The reader will think this a flimsy kind of distinction, but the difference is extremely hard to detect even by an experienced eye, so good are the imitations.

Collectors will meet a considerable number of

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early specimens with a Chien type of glaze on a light buff body of finer texture than the coarse, black body of Chien-yang, and lighter both in colour and in weight. To those who hanker after tracing specimens to their source of manufacture, the study of the early Chinese wares is as vexing as it is interesting. On the one hand we have splendid accounts from the brush of Chinese writers of wares which we have never seen; on the other we have specimens which cannot be assigned to any particular factory. To those who care not who made the bowl or pot, provided it is artistically pleasing, these perplexities mean nothing and they go on their way rejoicing in the possession of a thing of beauty whatever the source of origin.

The wares now to be described apparently come from the province of Honan, but from what particular factory or factories we cannot say at present. Many of them have been excavated in that province, but that is the most that can be said. Some have been found at Külühsien (see p. 153).

The variety of shapes is greater than in the case of the Chien yao, which was apparently confined to cups and bowls; fair-sized globular pots with lids are not uncommon, and wine jars and vases of different types may be found. The paste is a buff-coloured stoneware.

The glaze is very similar to the Chien glaze but, as a rule, not so thick and treacly; and, like it, is laid on the body without an underlying slip. The golden-brown markings are larger and resemble splashes rather than fleckings;

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sometimes these red-brown, oval patches are arranged in symmetrical fashion on the vessel and show that the potter exercised control in their incidence.

Occasionally bowls of the Honan type are found with the white slip technique; the mouth-rims are dressed in this way while the rest of the bowls show the usual black glaze, with or without "hare's fur" marking. An example is seen on Plate XXVIII, fig. 2. The same body is found in vases and, in the graceful example shown on Plate XXIX, the glaze has been sufficiently saturated with ferric oxide for the whole surface to appear as a red-brown. The Japanese call this glaze colour *kaki*.

Quite a different family of *temmoku* ware is represented by bowls said to have been made at Yung-ho Chên in Chi-an Fu in the province of Kiangsi, and the factory is associated by report with the Shu family mentioned on p. 127. The body is different from either of the two types described above. It is a buff stoneware with a yellowish tinge and the foot-finishes are roughly executed.

The glaze effects are often elaborate. Figures of birds and insects or geometric patterns are drawn in a glaze of different composition from the surrounding glaze; so that the figuring stands out in black against a reddish or flocculent grey background. The flocculent appearance is probably produced by adding clay to the glaze mixture. The same agency is employed to produce a tortoise-shell appearance which is a

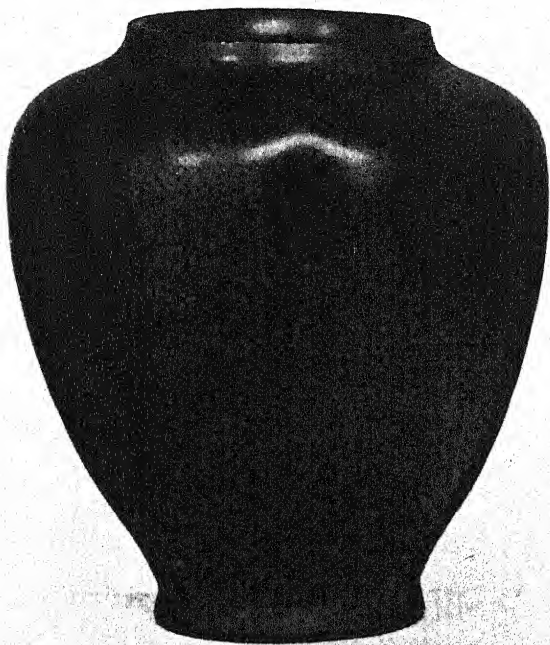


PLATE XXIX. Honan ware: VASE with lobed body and reddish brown glaze. $3\frac{1}{4}$ in. high. Sung dynasty. *Eumorfopoulos Collection*. (p. 162.)



PLATE XXX. Fig. 1.—Chian Fu ware : BOWL with "tortoise-shell" glaze. 5 in. diam. Sung dynasty. *Eumorfopoulos Collection.* (p. 163.)

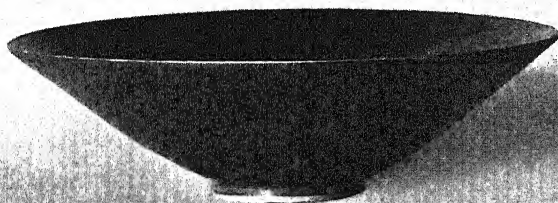


Fig. 2.—"Red Ting" BOWL with reddish brown glaze. $5\frac{1}{4}$ in. diam. Sung dynasty. *Eumorfopoulos Collection.* (p. 163.)

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feature of the exterior of most of these Kiangsi products. A bowl of the type showing this tortoise-shell effect is seen on Plate XXX, fig. 1. Occasionally bowls belonging to this family have a stencilled leaf design executed in a greyish-yellow glaze.

Lastly there are the bowls which have sometimes been called "red Ting" or "brown Ting." These have a light buff body like the Honan ware, and do not appear to have either the whiteness or fineness of the Ting paste. The glaze is a reddish-brown, brought about, as described above, by the use of a glaze with excess of ferric oxide. It is identical with the Japanese *kaki* glaze.

In the *T'ao Shuo*¹ we find reference to Ting Chou "hare's fur" mottled cups and to Ting ware like "carved red jade." It is no doubt these references which have caused collectors to search for red Ting, and in their strivings to have wondered whether these red-brown Honan bowls can be assigned to Ting Chou potters. The specimens seen to date do not convince; they have not the refinement or delicacy one associates with the art of the Ting Chou potter or of his sons who worked in Southern Sung days at Ching-tê Chên. One of the daintiest of the type is shown on Plate XXX, fig. 2.

From Corea also have come specimens of the Chien type which are practically indistinguishable from the Honan specimens, and these are assigned to the Korai dynasty (924-1392) or

¹ Book V.

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earlier.¹ It is, however, doubtful whether these wares are indigenous; probably they were imported from China and in course of time came to be regarded as examples of the art of early Corean potters.

While tea drinking was unknown in ancient Corea, there is no reason to suppose that other vices were not practised and that a mild gamble on the lines of the Chinese and Japanese tea contests might not have occupied the leisure moments of Corean society.

¹ See p. 15 of Mr. Bernard Rackham's introduction to the Catalogue of the Le Blond collection of Corean Pottery: Victoria and Albert Museum Handbook, 126 c.

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